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CAESAR





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JULIUS CAESAR

# CAESAR

GÉRARD WALTER

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Translated from the French  
by EMMA CRAUFURD



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VOLUME I

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## Preface

THIS book disregards all but the human features of the measureless image of Caesar who is thus seen on the level which nature assigns to living creatures bound by mortality. It probably will be said that the picture is too suggestive of our own day. That is not my fault. My one care in presenting it has been to maintain uninterrupted contact with Caesar and his times, and to keep close to the ancient sources. It is not for me to draw conclusions from this study which records only the stages of a life and stops when that life comes to an end. As for the earthly creature, deified, and seen as the perpetual symbol of the will to power which will torture the world for as long as there are men to inhabit it—such a subject is outside the range of this book which, I repeat, is only a simple historical account. I have tried to make it as clear and readable as possible. That is why I have not introduced notes and references into the text. They will be found at the end, arranged by chapters. I have also tried to help my readers to find their way, if they are tempted to enter the maze of controversy with which the combined and tireless efforts of modern historians have surrounded the person and work of Caesar. That is why this study ends with a methodical examination of Caesarian bibliography. I plead guilty in advance to all the lacunae and omissions which critics are sure to discover in my work. It remains for them to do better.

GÉRARD WALTER



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## Introduction

WHEN Caesar appeared on the historical horizon, the Roman State had been in existence for nearly seven hundred years. The humble little village had eventually become a great power, and after bringing all Italy and the adjacent islands into subjection had extended its dominion into Spain, Africa, and Asia. Its history during the four centuries following its foundation is difficult to study. Already in 1738 Louis de Beaufort, in his *Dissertation sur L'Incertitude des Cinq Premières Siècles de l'Histoire Romaine*, insisted on the legendary character of the accepted tradition. In the nineteenth century, starting with Niebuhr, there was a successive and systematic demolition of its foundations, and it was the eminent Italian scholar Ettore Pais who gave it its final death-blow at the beginning of the twentieth.

Just recently, however, there has been a growing realization that modern 'hypercriticism', with its craze for devastation, may have gone a little too far, sweeping away the true with the false, the useful with the valueless, pell-mell in its wholesale work of destruction. To-day there seems to be little objection to the acceptance of the story of Rome's origin as fact. There is a willingness to admit it as a basis for historical statement, but there is also an insistence on its misleading side: 'The history of primitive Rome,' we are told, 'was misrepresented from beginning to end to the advantage of one class—the patricians.' And indeed this would seem to be not only possible but inevitable. For history always was and always will be at the service of the dominant class of society, and I feel that it is useless in this connection to evoke examples which we have before our very eyes to-day. This, however, is not a reason for rejecting the whole story. Even while recognizing the massive falsifications and amputations of which the history of Rome's origin was the victim we can extract from it something—even though it be only a certain number of indications which will enable us to move, gropingly indeed, but still advancing, along the path of its evolution.

It was a band of plundering warriors, to whom tradition has given the name of Ramnes and has assigned Romulus as original leader,



who came to occupy Mount Palatine, so conveniently placed for watching the important trade route offered by the River Tiber and for launching raids on the merchants who made use of it for transporting their goods. A depression divided this mountain into two main halves—the eastern half was called Velia, the western included the hills of Palatius and Cermalus.

The city of the Palatine grew as a result of successive annexations. Opposite it to the west rose the hill of the Capitol, separated from Mount Palatine by a wood and a marsh. The Capitol was itself divided into two parts forming two distinct hills: the northern, where the citadel was to be built, and the southern, where they erected a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus. This southern hill was inhabited by a tribe who celebrated the cult of Saturn, hence its name of Saturnia. This tribe was made up of foreign elements which came up the Tiber from across the sea. After having made contact with the Ramnes it was eventually annexed by them.

The northern hill of Mount Capitolinus was joined to that of the Quirinal by an intermediary hill inhabited by the Tities or Sabini, who were likewise annexed by the Romans. Thus the Roman city was formed. By later attaching to itself the Etruscans, who lived on the neighbouring Mount Caelius, it became a federation of three tribes, or three hills: Palatine, Quirinal, and Caelius.

The original tribe of the Ramnes, when settling on the chosen territory, adopted a very definite system of organization, which they are believed to have borrowed from the Etruscans. Perhaps, however, it was simply their own interior structure which they had adapted to the new conditions. In any case, tradition holds that at the beginning they comprised a thousand families or hearths divided into ten categories each made up of a hundred families. Each category was called a *curia* and had at its head a chief known as the *curio* or *curionis*. Each *curia* was divided into ten *gentes*. To keep strictly to this decimal system, which, of course, seems somewhat artificial, but of which it is important to remember the actual divisions, each *gens* should have contained ten families.

During the first two hundred and fifty years of its existence the Roman State, as indeed all the cities of antiquity, was governed by kings. In Rome, however, royalty was of a special character. It was not based on heredity but election. At the same time the fact of being chosen by the vote of the people was not enough. The choice had also to be approved by the gods.

In practice this is what happened : at the king's death an *interrex* was appointed by drawing lots (which in itself was regarded as a manifestation of the divine will). Among his attributes he received the *jus auspicium*, that is to say the right to consult the gods and to interpret their wishes. These were manifested by symbolic acts : a flash of lightning at a given moment, the flight of birds in some special way or order, etc.

After having consulted the gods and received from them the names which found favour with them, the *interrex* called the assembly of the people together and submitted these divinely approved names to them. The people could only vote on the names proposed by the *interrex*. The candidate who thus obtained the majority of votes then sat upon a stone seat with his face towards the south. On his left the diviner took his place, his head bound with sacred filets and in his hand the rod which marked his holy office. He sketched in the heavens certain symbolic signs of which he alone knew the meaning, pronounced a prayer and, placing his hand on the head of the chosen candidate, he besought the gods to show by a visible sign that this new king was pleasing to them. This sign having been given, the king entered upon his office, which conferred absolute power upon him. He became at the same time high priest, military chief, and supreme judge of his subjects. He could not, however, interfere with the three organic foundations of the State : the city, the family, and the cult of the gods. They were holy and immutable, guaranteed by the unwritten law (*mos majorem*) which bound the king.

The king was assisted by the Senate. At the beginning this was a purely consultative body composed of the heads of the *gentes*. They had to be more than forty-five years old, that is to say *seniores*. According to the Greek tradition, represented by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, there were originally a hundred *seniores* created by Romulus. Another hundred Sabine senators subsequently joined them, thus making a total of two hundred *patres majorum gentium*, to whom later Tarquinius Priscus added another hundred *patres minorum gentium* taken from the non-patrician families.

In the interior structure of Rome under the kings it is possible to distinguish three classes of society, each with a distinct and clearly defined character.

Members of the *gens* were called *patres* when they were fathers of a family, or *patricii*, in other words, those who have a father. So the word *patricii* came later to be applied in general to all members of

the ancient *gens*. The word *patres* acquired a narrower meaning and was more especially applied to those among them who formed part of the Senate. Under the kings, the patricians enjoyed all rights and privileges. They had exclusive possession of all the magistracies, of religious rites, and the legal formulae. Their real property was ceaselessly increasing through the monopolization of State land (*ager publicus*). By usury, which they practised on an increasingly large scale, they greatly increased their movable riches. They formed the first order of the State.

The second order consisted of the plebs. Greek tradition attributes the division of the population into patricians and plebeians to Romulus. But it is not very easy to determine the exact elements of which the latter class was comprised. In any case it probably included the inhabitants of neighbouring cities, and more particularly of the countryside, who had been conquered by the urban patricians and of whom some had been taken to Rome while others were left in their own district. To these must be added refugees, foreigners protected by the State, and freed slaves (the stigma of servile origin was effaced in the third generation). In primitive times the plebs had no political rights, and their judicial powers were practically non-existent.

In order to improve their position, some of the plebeians became *clientes* of the patricians. Thus a third social class came to be formed which was intermediate between the patricians and the plebeians. The bond which united the client to his patron is somewhat comparable to that which in the middle ages bound the vassal to his overlord, but its character was at the same time more intimate and more narrow. The client belonged both to his patron and to the *gens* of which the latter was a member. He bore the same name. He participated in the cult of the *gens* by his presence at the celebration of its religious ceremonies, but he was not permitted to play an active part in them by offering sacrifice himself. He accompanied his patron in war, he contributed to the dowry of his daughters and to his ransom if he was taken prisoner, he helped him to pay his fines. In return, he held from him a portion of land for which he was required to pay certain dues and over which he only had the right of usufruct. As, however, the client's condition was hereditary and could only come to an end with the extinction of the *gens* of his patron, the little domain of which he had the use passed to his children, who held it on the same understanding as he had done.

## INTRODUCTION

Towards the middle of the sixth century B.C. a radical transformation of the social framework of the Roman State took place which completely changed its aspect. It must have been the result of a political crisis. There is no doubt as to its revolutionary character and it was probably due to the efforts of the plebs to improve their miserable condition. It has been connected with the name of the sixth king of Rome, Servius Tullius, and it earned for him the reputation which this monarch, who was perhaps more than a mere legendary hero, enjoyed with the generations which followed.

The Roman population was divided into thirty tribes or regions, each with a *curator* at its head. This classification, based purely on locality, made possible an extremely precise and strict administrative classification in the form of a five-yearly census. With the help of the *curatores*, new lists were drawn up. Fathers of families were required to declare their names and their fortunes, with a detailed estimate of their possessions. By means of these declarations the citizens were divided into five categories: (1) those whose fortune was valued at more than 100,000 asses; (2) those who possessed at least 75,000; (3) those who possessed at least 40,000; (4) those who possessed at least 25,000. For the fifth category opinions vary—some fixing the minimum at 12,500 and some at 10,000. Sons, although without any property of their own, were inscribed in the same category as their fathers. Merchants and artisans were excluded from these lists although they figured in the tribes, where they were divided into corporations whose formation was attributed by Plutarch to the second Roman king, Numa Pompilius. There were originally eight of these corporations: carpenters, potters, leather-workers, dyers, shoemakers, metal-workers, goldsmiths and flute players.

Each of the five categories was divided into two sections for military service. *Seniores*, who were over forty-five, and *juniores*, who had not yet reached this age. The legions were recruited from the latter—*seniores* were only bound to take part in the defence of the city. The essential division of these categories, however, was that of centuries. It was here that the legislator, or legislators, succeeded in reserving for the rich (and at this time only the patricians could be rich) the dominant position in the State. The first category, independently of the number of citizens who composed it, was divided into eighty centuries. It was reinforced by the inclusion of the privileged body of the knights, comprising six centuries made up

exclusively of patricians. In order further to increase the number of centuries of the first category, a certain number of men were chosen from among the rich plebeians. They belonged to this category on account of their wealth, and their conservative sentiments were probably well enough known. They were formed into twelve special centuries. In this way the first category totalled ninety-eight centuries, whilst the others taken together only numbered ninety centuries (the second, the third, and the fourth only had twenty centuries each, and the fifth thirty). As in the popular assemblies, the voting was by century and not by individuals, the first category, so long as a perfect unity was preserved within its ranks, could always be sure of having the majority.

The mass of individuals whose financial position did not give them the right to be inscribed even in the last class was likewise composed of a certain number of sub-divisions. Those whose possessions were estimated at a minimum of 1500 asses formed a special century, with a right to vote in the *comitia*. Military service was compulsory for them, but they counted as supplementaries. They accompanied the legions, but without bearing arms, and were destined to fill up the gaps caused by death. Those whose possessions came to less than 1500 asses, but were nevertheless over 375 asses, were only called to arms in quite exceptional circumstances. They were known as the *proletarii*. Below these came the *capite censi*, who were regarded as the dregs of humanity. They merely counted as heads in the census and were never called to arms.

Side by side with the categories which enjoyed full civic rights, the armourers and carpenters, considered from the military point of view independently of their place in the census but with due regard to the distinctions of age, formed two centuries. So did the musicians. The other artisans were not called to arms. In principle, freed slaves were likewise excluded from military service.

This purely military organization of the nation served also as a basis for its fiscal organization. All citizens were required to pay a tax of an as for every thousand asses in the estimated value of their patrimony. The *proletarii* were dispensed from this *tributum ex censu*.

The reform of Servius Tullius was of capital importance. For the first time the plebeians could vote in their centuries. Practically, however, their voice counted for nothing. Servius Tullius, or the clever legislators who sheltered behind his name, had taken every

## INTRODUCTION

precaution to ensure that, whatever happened, the rich would still be in the majority.

Tradition has it that the legislation of Servius was annulled by Tarquinius Superbus because it was too favourable to the patricians and limited the royal authority in financial matters. If this is true it provides a perfect explanation of the revolution in the palace which drove the last-named monarch from Rome.

It is important to notice that in this revolution the initiative did not come from the people. There has been an attempt to deny the historical reality of the men to whom tradition attributed it. L. Junius Brutus and Lucretius never existed, we are told. It would indeed reduce history to its very simplest form if we left blank spaces wherever our information proved uncertain or incomplete. Would it not be preferable at least to retain the few feeble indications of reality which the muse vouchsafes us? Brutus, the king's nephew, appears to have been carrying out the duties of a tribune of the *celeres*, in other words, he was commander in chief of the royal guard, a picked body of men responsible for the protection of the king's person. Already in foregoing reigns, if we are to accept the tradition, those who preceded Brutus in this office had tried, not altogether unsuccessfully, to bring about a *coup d'état*. In itself, therefore, Brutus' attempt was no innovation, but its consequences and the subsequent developments were. It must also be noted that this revolution could not have succeeded without the help, not to say complicity, of the *praefectus urbi* Lucretius (father to Collatinus' unhappy wife) to whom, in accordance with the custom, Tarquinius, when leaving Rome, had delegated his powers inside the capital. At all events Lucretius, who in virtue of his office was responsible for keeping order within the city and safeguarding the monarchical institutions, made not the slightest objection to the convocation of the *comitia* by Brutus. We can read in the first book of Livy an extremely vivid and picturesque account of this session at which the rule of the kings was abolished in Rome. The account needs serious qualification however.

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, following upon the pronouncement by the *comitia* of the king's expulsion, Lucretius would have been expelled as *interrex*, and it was he who afterwards, at a second meeting, proposed the establishment of a new system of government. The royal office was not to be purely and simply abolished. There was still to be a king, but all his political, judicial, and military attributes were taken from him. Henceforward his

authority was to be of a purely religious order and, as *rex sacrosanctus*, obscure and hidden, no more in truth than a royal puppet, he would continue to function throughout the Republic. Two magistrates were to take their place beside him. They were to be officially known as *judices* (judges) in time of peace, *praetores* (leaders or commanders) in time of war, and as there were two of them, the adjective *consules* (colleagues) was added to their names. As time went on this last term alone was retained and was applied to both of them.

Accordingly, these two 'colleagues' shared power and held it only for one year. The Romans with their astounding genius for concrete definition, summed up the whole of their office in two words. Both in common, and indivisibly (that is to say, acting together), they held the *imperium* (military and judicial power) and the *potestas* (administrative power).

The new system was established by the patricians and for the patricians. It has been argued that the kings, and in particular Servius Tullius the 'democratic king', looked to the people for support in their struggle against the patricians, who refused to submit to their absolute authority. Perhaps. . . . In any case, neither Servius Tullius nor the other kings did anything to enable the plebeians to make effective use of their political rights. We have seen how the 'great reform' of Servius Tullius reduced them to mere ciphers in this matter.

Now the plebs, becoming conscious of their importance (their participation had necessarily been required for the *coup d'état* which had just taken place) began the long and arduous battle for their political rights. This they did in the very first year of the new régime. It was the law *Valeria de provocatione* introduced by P. Valerius Publicola and presented to the consuls after the almost immediate departure of Tarquinius Collatinus\* which struck the first blow at that consular authority with which at first only patricians could be invested. It decreed that henceforward it would be possible to appeal to the people's assemblies in the case of death sentences pronounced by the consuls in time of peace.

Henceforward for about two centuries (509–286 ?) Roman history is the story of a permanent struggle between these two social classes :

\* According to the generally accepted version, the people had appointed as Brutus' colleague Lucretia's husband, in order to console him to some extent for his sorrow. He was, however, asked immediately to give up his name, which recalled that of the exiled king and was considered too compromising.

## INTRODUCTION

patricians and plebeians. The wars which occupy so large a place in Roman historiography (which was merely adapting itself to the taste of the readers of that period nearly all of whom had been to the war or who were closely related to those who had distinguished themselves in that field) were only interludes, often artificially provoked by those in authority, in order the better to control those they governed, thanks to the special powers which were automatically granted to them for the duration of hostilities.

The patricians had all the rights and all the powers in every field. The plebeians had nothing. But they were far more numerous (the patricians had fewer and fewer children, the plebeians, on the contrary, proved to be particularly prolific) and they had fully determined to push to the front. I will confine myself to making a simple list of the chief episodes which marked this struggle :

1. The first withdrawal of the plebeians (*secessio plebii*) on the Mons Sacer, which led to the constitution of the plebs as a separate community.

2. The creation of tribunes and people's aediles.

3. The creation of the people's councils.

4. The Lex Publia 471 B.C. on the legal value of plebiscites,\* always subject to the Senate's approval, however.

5. The period of unrest which lasted from 471 B.C. until the first decemvirate. It was during this period that the number of tribunes was increased from five to ten and that the Icilian plebiscite (so called after the tribune Icilius who had it voted) took place, concerning the redistribution of the lands of the Aventine among the plebeians.

6. The two decemvirates and the law of the Twelve Tables.

7. The second withdrawal of the plebs on the Aventine, then on the Mons Sacer.

8. The plebiscite of Canulejus which authorized marriage between patricians and plebeians.

9. The creation of the censorship (443 or 435 B.C.) which dealt a serious blow at consular power and which was at first reserved exclusively for patricians.

10. The three Licinian laws (367 B.C.), one of which decreed that henceforth one of the two consuls must be chosen from the plebeians. It took twenty-five years, however, before this was effectively put into practice (342 B.C.).

11. The creation of the office of praetor, at first reserved exclusively

\* Legislative measures voted by the plebeians in their assemblies.



for patricians. Thirty years later (337 B.C.) it was opened to plebeians.

12. The plebeians' capture of the censorship (361 B.C.) and of the dictatorship (356 B.C.).

13. The Lex Ogulnia opened the colleges of the augurers and pontiffs to the plebeians (300 B.C.).

14. The last withdrawal of the plebs on the Janiculum.

15. The divulgation by the *curule aedile* Cn. Flavius of the judicial calendar and of the legal formulae (about 307 B.C.).

16. The Lex Hortensia (289-286) which established the unconditional value of the plebiscite without the Senate's authorization.

From this time onwards there was practically no more inequality of rights, and the patricians, with the exception of a few rare families imbued with an irradicable sense of the nobility of their descent, formed a uniform political body. But the struggle was to continue. Only, henceforward, the accent was to be on social inequality and we find ruined patricians making common cause with plebeians in a combined attack upon the rich, or plebeians and patricians fraternally united in the defence of their situations and their fortunes. It is thus that the last two centuries of the Republic were characterized by social revolts of which the attempt of the Greeks and the slaves' insurrection, an event of capital importance which requires closer study, were the chief landmarks.

Here I will close this very summary outline of the political evolution of the Roman Republic,\* and make way for the amazing hero who is preparing to enter upon the historical scene.

\* For a detailed account see my *Histoire de la République* to be published by Albin Michel.

PART ONE

ENTRANCE UPON  
THE STAGE OF HISTORY



## *The Child Becomes a Man*

IT is the fifteenth of March in the year 84 B.C. The modest home of the former praetor C. Julius Caesar, situated in the populous district of Subura, is filled with joyful animation. On this day<sup>1</sup> his son Caius, completing his sixteenth year, is for the first time to don the toga of manhood. It is an event of capital importance in the life of a young Roman, who thus crosses the barrier erected by the ancient and inflexible law of his country between childhood and maturity. To this solemn ceremony all members of the family are invited, the living and the dead.

The vast hall which serves as reception room in a Roman house has been crowded since daybreak. An uninterrupted stream of friends and relations pours in. Those admitted into the vestibule hasten to push their way into the *atrium*, where the master of the house, standing in front of the wide open *lararium*, receives the congratulations of his guests.

While in the adjoining room the hero of the festivity is undergoing an anxious inspection by his adoring mother and at the same time listening with half an ear to the last instructions of his tutor, let us take a brief glance at those members of the family who have triumphed over the oblivion of the centuries which separate them from us.

It is difficult if not impossible to arrive at the origin of the *gens* Julia. In a public speech delivered before a numerous gathering of fellow citizens, Caesar himself placed them outside all ordinary categories, declaring peremptorily that they were descended in direct line from Venus, and, as if this divine connection were not enough to illustrate the full glory of his family, he claimed that one of the first legendary kings of Rome was an ancestor of his grandmother. That is why the Julii, to use Caesar's own words, 'united the sacred character of kings who are masters of men with the holiness of the gods from whom even the kings receive their glory'. The explanation seems to have completely satisfied his hearers.

Another problem still remains unsolved: which Julius was the first to take the name of Caesar and for what reason? A tradition has

been established which connects the name with an exploit accomplished during the first Punic War by a member of the *gens* Julia who vanquished in combat an elephant of the Carthaginian army. In order to perpetuate the memory of this historic feat, he was accorded the surname of Caesar, meaning in the Punic language 'elephant'. This famous ancestor has been placed in about the year 250 B.C. and a modern scholar, as a result of erudite reasoning, has decided that of the four praenomina in use among the *gens* Julia, he probably bore that of Lucius.<sup>2</sup>

Let us now pass on to more precise investigations. The first of the Julius Caesars officially recognized in history was called Sextus Julius Caesar and was praetor in 208 B.C. He had two sons : Sextus II, the first in the family to hold the office of consul (157 B.C.) and Lucius, presumably the second of the name if we count the problematical ancestor mentioned above. This Lucius II was praetor in 183 and died unexpectedly in 166, as Pliny tells us in the seventh book of his *Natural History*. His son was the first Caius of the *gens* Julia. All we know about him is that he married a certain Marcia of the *gens* Marcii Reges, which made it possible for his grandson, as we have seen, to claim a still greater brilliance for his already dazzling ancestry. Three children were born of this union : a daughter and two sons. It is not known what the special circumstances were which led to the marriage of the daughter to an uncouth and boorish upstart, who incidentally turned out to be one of the most glorious captains of the Republic and just finished becoming a great statesman. His name, though spattered with blood, shines out with enduring splendour in the annals of Roman history : Marius.

The elder of the two sons of Caius I we shall discuss later. We will only consider the younger one, Caius II, for the moment. Married to one Aurelia, whose family counted numerous eminent magistrates, brother-in-law of the all-powerful master of the Republic, it would seem that he could have risen quickly to a brilliant political career. This he did not do. After climbing in leisurely fashion the various rungs of the ladder made necessary by the conventions and customs of his time, he halted at the last stage but one, the praetorship. Why he did not make use of his numerous useful connections to facilitate his access to supreme honours, we do not know. Perhaps the explanation lies in the delicate position in which he was placed on account of the many members of Sulla's party in his wife's family. Of Aurelia's three brothers, one, the illustrious orator L. Aurelius Cotta, had

preferred exile rather than renounce his pro-Sullan convictions. The two others put up with the régime more or less unwillingly, counting the days. We must also take into account the prestige of Marius' wife and the influence which she exercised on her brother who, torn between the party of Marius and that of Sulla, might well have finished by retiring from public life, if only to avoid taking part in a conflict which appeared more and more inextricable. The few indications that we have suggest that he finally retired into private life at the age of forty. A son was born to him on July 13 of the year 100 B.C.,<sup>3</sup> and, like his father and grandfather, was given the name of Caius. This Caius III will be remembered for all time under the name of Caesar.

A second branch of the *gens* Julia is designated by the *praenomen* of Sextus. It first comes into history with the elder brother of Caesar's father, Sextus IV. It is true that the mark which he made is almost imperceptible, although he was invested as consul in the year 91 B.C. It was his colleague, L. Marcius Philippus, who in effect directed the affairs of the State. He was entrusted afterwards, in the capacity of proconsul, with the suppression of sedition among the inhabitants of Asculum. After having taken possession of the town he fell ill and was obliged to give up his command. He died soon afterwards.

His son Sextus V appears from the start to have renounced politics as a career. He became a priest and so remained to the end of his days. His life flowed on in the shade, unknown and silent, parallel to the tumultuous and resplendent course of his immortal cousin, but we frequently have reason to guess at his hidden influence on the course of events, often on decisive and important occasions. He left a son, Sextus VI, who later became a devoted follower of the dictator and of whom Caesar was to speak as '*amicus et necessarius*'.<sup>4</sup>

There is still a third branch of the Julii which must be noted. Its members had a weakness for the name of Lucius. We already know the first two. We also know the elder brother of Lucius II, the consul Sextus II. It is the latter's son, Lucius III, who interests us here, or rather his children. From his marriage with Popilia, contracted about 135, two sons were born; the elder, Lucius IV, consul in 90 B.C.,<sup>5</sup> became the sworn enemy of Marius, who had him put to death after his troops took Rome in 87. The younger, C. Caesar Strabo, aedile during the year of his brother's consulate and member of the College of Pontiffs, was considered one of the best orators of his time, and one of its most brilliant writers. He showed himself to

be bitterly hostile to Marius, like his brother, whose fate he shared. Their two heads were exposed together in the Forum, on the orators' tribune.

It is scarcely a year since their *imagines* were joined to those already placed in the little delicately sculptured niches, which, running in regular lines along the walls, decorate the *atrium* of their cousin. To-day, the doors of their narrow dwelling-places have been thrown wide open, laurel wreaths adorn their brows and with their fixed, ineffable smiles they await the moment when the prayers of the living will rise, imploring them to keep paternal watch over their young descendant whose miraculous destiny is about to begin.

The door opens. The 'child' appears. He is a frail and charming youth, graceful as a girl. His rather long, pale face is of exquisite delicacy<sup>6</sup>; only the mouth, which is slightly too large, with somewhat full sensuous lips, is a little out of proportion. We are above all held by his eyes: black and piercing, they have in them sudden fleeting gleams which momentarily rise to the surface like the reflection of distant lightning. He comes forward with an easy bearing, clothed in a white woollen tunic, which he put on overnight as a good omen.

There is a sudden silence. The ceremony begins. Gravely the father recites the words invoking the help of his ancestors for his son. Caius attentively follows the ritual gestures and strives to play his part without faltering. Now the most solemn moment is approaching. Slowly the lad comes forward, stiffening to the utmost his natural, gliding walk. He places on the altar the golden ball which has protected his childhood from ill-fortune, takes off his *praetexta* with its purple border and receives from his father's hand the plain white toga of manhood.<sup>7</sup> Another moment and, draped in its folds, he has turned towards the assembled company, who show their admiration by an appreciative and flattering murmur.

The second stage follows: the journey to the Forum where the name of a new citizen must be inscribed on the civic lists. A procession is formed, with Caius at its head and his father and mother at his side. Pell-mell from all directions the guests surge round them, and, following at a respectful distance, a bedraggled crowd of beggars trail along, on the look-out for the customary largess after the ceremony.

This tumultuous passage across the city on the feast day of Bacchus, which a very ancient custom has designated as the day for the clothing of young Romans in the toga of manhood, is certainly the most

picturesque of episodes. At every street corner similar processions are encountered, larger or smaller, more or less sumptuous, according to the rank and wealth of each. From all directions, coming from every quarter of the city, they troop towards the Forum where beats the heart of Rome. From one procession to another they call to each other, exchange greetings, good wishes, congratulations. Is it not in reality one great family party, this reunion of the *gens*, whose ramifications cross one another far into the distance and form a bond which unites their sons for ever ?<sup>8</sup>

It is nearly midday. The road from the Subura to the Forum is long and progress is slow in the midst of this gay, jostling crowd. Caius keeps on walking. But the effort seems to have tired him, and besides, in order that he should have the manly grace which befits a new-made Roman citizen, they have fastened his new belt too tightly. He finds this very uncomfortable. Then, surreptitiously, he loosens it with a rapid, furtive gesture, and lets the pleats of his tunic float freely. This style of dress will distinguish him all his life.<sup>9</sup>

At last they have arrived. The inscription is made on the *tabularium* of the tribunes and at the same time his praenomen Caius is officially declared and recognized. This formality accomplished, he must still go up to the Capitol where, at the *ara* of the goddess Juventas, he will give thanks with all his family to the gods of the State for their help in bringing this ceremony to so happy a conclusion. This is the last item on the programme, and there is nothing left but to sit down to a meal. Accordingly the whole company returns to the family home, where all friends and relations are happily united in a feast.



## Getting under Way

HENCEFORTH, while still under his father's authority, Caesar could, within certain restricted limits, dispose of his time and energy and guide his own studies and interest himself in public affairs, although he could not take any active part in them.

There is good reason to believe that the first phase of Caesar's education was very similar to that generally given to children of Roman families of the same social level as his own. An only son, he had spent his childhood in an essentially feminine atmosphere with his mother and two sisters.<sup>10</sup> The first thing he was taught was fear of the gods and respect for the law; he was also instructed in the rules of kindness, modesty, and frugality. When he was about ten, he was entrusted to the charge of a *grammaticus*, the learned M. Antonius Gniphio, a Gaul by origin, but formed in the Alexandrian school of rhetoric, and considered by his contemporaries as particularly well versed in Greek and Roman literature.<sup>11</sup> He learned to read and think from Homer, first in the Latin translation of Livius Andronicus, then in the original text. Certain passages from contemporary authors were added to this primary foundation of literary instruction which was given in a more or less uniform manner to all young Romans of the period. The tutor was chiefly concerned in seeing that the pupil's pronunciation was correct, and in expounding, first the outward form and structure of the work, its grammar and style, and then the subject matter, which was minutely analysed from the point of view of poetics, history of literature, general history, philosophy, and morality.

Once he had acquired this knowledge, Caesar had to learn by heart some of the texts which had been explained, or to develop them in writing. He would be asked to write down some little story or to transpose certain passages of poetry into prose. At the same time his tutor would initiate him into the art of oratory, making him declaim examples of eloquence selected from the works of ancient and modern masters. But now that he had said good-bye to his childhood, all this was over. Now he need no longer incline meekly

to his teacher's wishes. He had complete liberty to read and write what he pleased. He took advantage of this ; it even seems that he abused his freedom a little. At all events, we know that besides some tragedies which he attempted at this period, history makes mention of some youthful verses so daring and licentious that his successor Augustus judged it necessary to withdraw them from circulation out of respect for Caesar's memory.

The prospect which the immediate future offered him was twofold : military service and marriage. Neither the one nor the other was particularly to his taste. With his fragile constitution and delicate health he had little inclination for life in a camp. As for becoming a husband and the father of a family, the choice imposed upon him in the matter of a spouse could scarcely draw him in that direction. His father had found him a fiancée of obscure origin, whose chief, if not only, recommendation was her immense fortune. Here again, the prudent circumspection of the former praetor showed itself. Nothing would have been easier for him than to arrange a brilliant match for his son by choosing a wife among the daughters, nieces, or other descendants of a Marius or a Cinna. We can be quite certain that his sister Julia did not fail to urge him in this direction, which would have enabled the young Caesar to make himself a magnificent career with ease and rapidity. But to all these high hopes Caesar's father preferred the tangible reality of the large dowry which the youthful Coësutia would bring to fill his coffers.<sup>12</sup>

Thus the spring, summer, and perhaps part of the autumn passed. Caesar's father was in the provinces, called away by business, about which we have no details ; his mother was preparing to receive her new daughter-in-law, Caesar himself was letting the days drift by in happy idleness, while somewhere in her parents' home a young maiden was finishing her trousseau and anxiously awaiting her wedding day.

Suddenly news came from Pisa : Caesar's father had fallen dead as he was finishing his toilet.<sup>13</sup>

Caesar's life was immediately and utterly changed. First came the brusque dismissal of the rich fiancée. Why ? There are no exact details on this subject, but certain hypotheses are permissible. We are inclined to think that Caesar's aunt had a hand in it. Julia had lost none of her influence since the death of her redoubtable husband in January, 86. Cinna, who had taken the place of Marius, listened with deference to the widow of his former chief and colleague.

Accordingly, this lady, who must certainly have opposed the dingy plans mapped out for Caesar's marriage by his father, can scarcely have failed to seize her opportunity and to propose a profitable alliance of quite a different order. Cinna had a marriageable daughter. In becoming the son-in-law of the ruler of the State, Caesar would immediately be able to entertain vast ambitions. So it came about that his marriage with Cornelia was decided upon.

Caesar made no objection. He sent the customary letter to Cossutia, announcing that the engagement was broken off, and married the daughter of Cinna. His marriage accomplished,<sup>14</sup> he was ready to embark on public life. There was, however, one more question to be settled—what was to be his field of action? He was too young to be a State magistrate; the military career, which alone was open to him at that moment, appealed to him no more than it had in the past. What was believed to be a clever expedient was found: Caesar was to become a priest of Jupiter!<sup>15</sup>

Since that day in December, 87, when the venerable L. Cornelius Merula, *flamen Dialis* and highest of the Roman sacrificial priests, cut his veins at the feet of the statue of his god on the Capitol, his place had never been filled. It was the year 83, and suddenly government circles discovered that this state of affairs was intolerable. The *pontifex maximus* was instructed to make an immediate choice from the three candidates whose names were to be submitted to him in accordance with the law; at the same time he was told that his choice, supposedly free, was to fall on the candidate named Caesar. So it happened that, at the age of seventeen, Caesar found himself chosen for one of the highest priestly offices of Rome, second only in dignity to that of Supreme Pontiff.

It would be an exaggeration to pretend that this honour made him perfectly happy.

The office of priest of Jupiter, apart from the great distinction attached to it, had serious disadvantages, above all for a young man who had no intention of curbing his worldly activities or giving up his pleasures before he had even learnt to savour them.

In the first place, the priestly garb alone was enough to plunge him into the deepest consternation. In winter and summer the *flamen Dialis* had to wear a thick woollen *praetexta* toga when he appeared in public. It is true that this garment was woven by his wife, but unfortunately that made it none the lighter. His head was smothered in an extraordinary bonnet resembling a Balaclava helmet, on top of

which swayed a kind of wooden stalk, wound round with a woollen thread, like a bobbin, its end floating in every breeze. Because he must have no contact with anything impure, the *flamen* was forbidden to touch an endless number of objects and animals. Because nothing must interfere with the freedom of his movements, he was not allowed to wear the smallest kind of chain; no knot or bow was allowed on his clothes, which had to be fastened with hooks. And if he wanted to have his hair cut he was obliged to ask a free man to assist him; moreover, that individual had to use bronze clippers, since no other metal was deemed fitting for such an operation. But young Romans were chiefly deterred by the lifelong obligation imposed upon the *flamen Dialis* to be 'the man of only one woman', and still more serious was the ruling that forbade the holding of any other public office. Thus all those who had the slightest political ambition carefully avoided this embarrassing honour. The authorities were reduced to taking either invalids, whose poor health obliged them to refuse all public responsibilities demanding any physical effort, or incompetent individuals who had failed everywhere else, or even bad characters whose families were eager to get rid of them at any price.<sup>16</sup>

Even so, candidates were becoming more and more difficult to find. As a result certain concessions had to be made in the strict rule concerning the holding of other offices, and, in the last century of the Republic, the *flamen* could assume other functions provided they did not entail his absence from Rome. Hence L. Cornelius Merula was later called to be consul in place of the banished Cinna. We have already seen the consequence of this experiment for him. After his death the post remained vacant until, at the time of which we are writing, it served to inaugurate the political career of an adolescent of seventeen.

We do not know what were Caesar's personal reactions when the sudden decision of his father-in-law brought this about. We can merely state that he made no protest. Nor have we details of his private life during this period. We only know that at about this time his wife gave birth to a daughter.

Thus, on the threshold of his eighteenth year, Caesar found himself husband, father and head of a family, and pledged like his pious cousin Sextus to the peaceful, austere life of a priest in the service of the most venerated of all the gods of Rome.

*First Trials*

THEN came another dramatic event : Cinna was assassinated by his soldiers and Sulla entered Rome. What was to become of Caesar ? His marriage with Cornelia had placed him officially on the defeated side and presumably would entail the severest proscriptions. He was, however, spared. Better still, continuing that policy of conciliation which had succeeded so well with certain notable Marians, Sulla tried to draw him into his party. But he required of Caesar, as he did of others, to give a pledge of his fidelity and to prove the sincerity of his conversion by sending away his wife and marrying a candidate chosen by himself. Caesar's reply was a refusal.<sup>17</sup> Such an act of courage on the part of this apparently indolent and apathetic young man must have greatly surprised his friends. It has been suggested that, apart from any political considerations, this was a clear proof of the love he bore his wife. According to another hypothesis it was intended to mark his formal repudiation of all advances from the new head of the Republic. The former explanation seems nearer to the truth. But above all we have the impression—incidentally borne out by subsequent events—that, besides being a very bold gesture, it was also a rather rash and thoughtless move of which he did not weigh all the consequences until it was too late.

As was to be expected, Sulla showed great displeasure and ordered his immediate arrest. At the same time he cancelled his nomination to the priesthood and confiscated all his fortune. Caesar's only course was flight. It was 'during the night and in disguise', as Velleius Paterculus tells us, that he left Rome and sought asylum in some lonely villa of the Sabine country. But the region was not safe. On all sides there were bands of Sulla's 'proscriptors' hunting down future victims who were seeking as best they could to escape the sword hanging over their heads. From this time on Caesar had to face the life of a fugitive, which seems to have been almost too much for him to bear. He was obliged to change his hiding-place each night and, as he had neither the endurance nor the training for this

kind of existence, he ended by falling ill. Wracked by fever, he had to be carried on a litter from one place of refuge to another. During one of these moves he was captured by Sulla's police.

He was quickly recognized and his fate seemed to be sealed. At the last minute Caesar with remarkable presence of mind signalled to the man in charge, one Cornelius Phagita, of whom we know nothing except that he was numbered among the most zealous 'executioners' in the service of the new head of the Roman Republic. A discreet colloquy began. It is useless to try to reconstruct it, but the subject-matter is perfectly clear. The price of an outlaw's head was two talents, to be paid to whoever presented it to the appointed authorities. Well, here were the two talents! Phagita could have his money straight away, without wasting time or making an unnecessary journey. As for Caesar, he would have the indisputable advantage of keeping his head on his shoulders. The police leader appreciated these arguments; he pocketed the agreed sum and released the prisoner.

After this untimely encounter, Caesar judged it advisable to put the sea between himself and his persecutors. He went to the Adriatic coast with the intention of reaching Greece or perhaps Asia. We do not know exactly what his plans were, because finally he had to give up this project. Was it his health which prevented him from undertaking a crossing which promised to be difficult and dangerous? It is impossible to decide. We only know that he agreed to surrender and made no objection to the steps taken by his family to obtain the dictator's pardon for him. Aurelia called upon the help of her brother, the eminent L. Aurelius Cotta, who had returned to Rome when Sulla came into power and whose prestige was high among the conqueror's followers. She also appealed to her nephew Sextus, the *flamen Quirinalis*, of whom Caesar had nearly become a colleague and superior, according to the pontifical hierarchy of Rome. He lent himself to the task with a good grace and set the vestal virgins to work under his directions. Others who were approached were Mam. Aemilius Lepidus, a relation by marriage, and the young Pompey who, since his recent conversion to Sulla's camp, seemed to be on the way to becoming an important personage in the new régime. In this connection Suetonius mentions, though without naming them, certain 'personalities of the greatest importance' and 'the best friends' of Sulla who overwhelmed him with appeals in favour of Caesar. This author stresses that for a long time Sulla

would listen to none of them. He could not overlook the fact that this youth, who was so careless in belting his tunic, had dared to disobey his orders. Perhaps underneath all the apparent inconsistencies and contradictions of his young 'adversary' he was able to detect a strength of will and character which, once stabilized, would make him powerful and terrible to his enemies. . . . Anyhow, he finally gave in. Suetonius reports that on this occasion he addressed the suppliants in the following terms, 'Have your way and keep him, but know that this man whose welfare is so precious to you will one day cause the downfall of the aristocratic party which you have helped me to defend. There is many a Marius in one Caesar.'

In Dion Cassius' version the awesome dictator is less loquacious. He limits himself to a brief word of warning, but how significant it is! 'Beware of this youth who wears his girdle so badly fastened.' And these words ring truer than Suetonius' pseudo-prophetic amplification, of which the retrospective colouring is obvious.<sup>18</sup>

Caesar showed a cautious wisdom in judging that Sulla's 'pardon' might prove to be merely a truce of short duration and that it would be more prudent for him to live as far as possible from Rome and her ruler. He accordingly set to work to find an opportunity for leaving the capital without delay and without raising suspicion.

He found his chance in 81 when the propraetor M. Minucius Thermus was entrusted with the mission of punishing the rebellious people of Mitylene for daring to shake off the Roman yoke during the first war with Mithridates. Caesar was attached to his staff as *contubernalis*. It was a custom at this time for a Roman general setting out on a distant expedition to take with him a certain number of young men of good family, with no specialized knowledge, but cultured and well mannered, who could keep him company at table and share his leisure hours. They had no particular functions and hardly took part in the military operations, but from time to time they were given missions of a varied and episodic character. One day Caesar was told to travel to Bithynia to ask the ruler of that country to show a little more eagerness in dispatching his fleet, which the Romans needed to complete the blockade of the capital of Lesbos. This, however, needs a few words of explanation.

Among the 'allies' whom the Roman Republic honoured with her protection figured the king of Bithynia, Nicomedes IV, 'a sad specimen, both greedy and cruel', according to the recent evaluation

of J. Carcopino. 'He may have poisoned his father', suggests this learned historian.<sup>19</sup>

For my part, I consider the hypothesis perfectly reasonable. I would merely add that at that period such procedure was very much in vogue and was the favourite course of his neighbours and fellow rulers when they judged that they had held the position of heir to the parental throne long enough. I must also draw attention to the fact that even centuries later a good number of the princes of Christian Byzantium had recourse to the same method and that it would therefore be signally unjust to hold Nicomedes of Bithynia up as anything exceptional in the way of a monster.

On coming to power he had immediately given his allegiance to Rome and he was unmoveable in his fidelity to the gilded yoke he bore, constantly refusing to be associated with the numerous intrigues of Mithridates and those who emulated him in his attempts to undermine the power of Rome in the Near East. As master of the Asiatic coast of the Bosphorus, Nicomedes could control all the shipping and traffic in the Dardanelles. The Romans profited by this, but Nicomedes found it very much to his advantage too, holding ships and traders for ransom at his own good pleasure while himself resting in perfect security under the shadow of his powerful 'protectors'.

When, in 88, the Romans in Asia were crushed by the troops of Mithridates, the king of Bithynia took refuge in Rome. Three years afterwards, when Sulla's legions had restored the situation, he returned to his kingdom and continued his 'operations', his festivities and celebrations as of yore; for this barbarian king had a passion for luxury—oriental luxury of the highest degree. And so it was that, carried away by the pleasures of the table and the pleasures of love—oriental love, be it remembered—he finished by forgetting his duties as monarch and, what was more serious, his duties as an 'ally'.

This happened in 81, when Minucius Thermus was engaged in besieging Mitylene.<sup>20</sup> By the terms of the 'agreement' which the Republic had imposed upon him, Nicomedes IV was pledged to place his entire fleet, which was large and well equipped, at the disposal of Rome as soon as he was asked. Needing these vessels, and seeing no sign of their arrival at the appointed time, Minucius Thermus charged Caesar to convey to the king of Bithynia a demand—no doubt couched in stern enough language—requiring his immediate action.<sup>21</sup>

When the young messenger of the Roman general appeared,



Nicomedes was completely dazzled. The impression Caesar made upon him was so great that, having been informed of the object of his mission, he offered him his own sleeping chamber in which to rest after the long and arduous journey. 'The king's guards escorted him thither, and there he slept on a bed of gold with a purple covering', Cicero assures us. The next day, in the king's palace, a brilliant feast was held in the presence of some Roman merchants who happened to be passing through Bithynia. Caesar showed himself to be so delighted by the welcome given him that not remembering, or refusing to remember, the official character of his mission, he accepted the rôle of cup-bearer to Nicomedes during the banquet, fulfilling his duties in the same way as, and in company with, several seductive young ephebes who formed the 'seraglio' of his royal friend.<sup>22</sup>

The adventure became known in Rome and seriously prejudiced Caesar's reputation. As for himself, he does not seem to have attached much importance to it. Such a voluptuous atmosphere of exotic luxury pleased him immensely and he did his best to prolong his visit to the utmost limit. The ships were ready, however, and he had to leave, but he contrived to return to Bithynia as soon as ever he reached his destination, 'on the pretext of having to deliver a sum due to some client of his who had been set free', writes Suetonius. 'The rest of the campaign won him a better reputation', adds this author. And it is true that his superior deemed it in order to bestow upon him a civic crown at the taking of Mitylene.

This needs a word of explanation. According to the rules on military decorations in force in the Roman army, the civic crown was awarded to those who had saved the life of a soldier in battle; some modern historians therefore claim that Caesar had distinguished himself by this act of courage during the last days of the siege. This is far from certain, since none of the ancient writers make definite mention of it. The simple fact that Caesar was recommended for this distinction can never be taken as a sufficient reason for attributing such an action to him. Generals were known to shower civic crowns upon their colleagues for the most varied and often frivolous reasons. There was M. Fulvius Nobilior,<sup>23</sup> for instance, who, if we can believe Cato, distributed them to his soldiers in recognition of the zeal with which they had dug wells and erected fortifications. As we have no precise details of the action which won this decoration for Caesar, it would be better, I think, not to exaggerate its importance. Caesar needs it less than anyone.

## FIRST TRIALS

At any rate, the campaign of Mitylene was finished, and Minucius Thermus was preparing to dismiss his troops. What was to become of Caesar? Perhaps he would have returned once more to his friend Nicomedes if he had not heard that the governor of Cilicia, P. Servilius Isauricus, was preparing a punitive expedition against the pirates who infested the coastal regions of his province.<sup>24</sup> He went to offer him his services, which were accepted. But scarcely had the campaign started when news reached him: Sulla was dead. He left everything and returned with all speed to Rome.

## *A Stay in Rome*

SUETONIUS has no scruples in giving the real reasons which hastened Caesar's return to Rome. He counted on the confusion which would follow the death of Sulla to enable him to push right to the front of the political scene. As, however, he was far from the centre of events, and no doubt badly and insufficiently informed, he had imagined the situation in Rome to be very different from what it really was. It is again Suetonius who tells us that 'on his return Caesar found the circumstances less favourable than he had hoped'.

The question, then, for us to decide is why these 'circumstances' did not seem to him favourable enough, and why they did not fit in with his wishes and intentions. First of all, what were they, and what were his own plans and projects?

I suppose the reader has some knowledge of the repercussions which the death of Sulla had on the course of events in Rome, and I imagine that he knows at least the outline of the adventurous career of Lepidus, who had been the first openly to attack the dictator while he was alive. I would only warn him against a somewhat unfair interpretation of the character and activities of this personage, an interpretation which tends to persist on grounds which have nothing to do with historical science in the strict sense of the word.

Quite recently, for instance, we have seen an historian such as J. Carcopino repeat on his own account the crushing judgment uttered nearly two centuries ago by the solemn President de Brosses who, naturally enough, regarded Lepidus merely as an 'anarchist' and a 'shameless demagogue'.<sup>25</sup>

Let us listen to J. Carcopino: 'An utter scoundrel', 'without convictions or scruples', Lepidus 'advertised his subversive programme and his egotistical hatreds in the Forum'.<sup>26</sup> We will try to formulate this 'programme' and to examine these 'hatreds'. It may then be possible to judge how far the one is 'subversive' and the other 'egotistical'.

The law on sustenance is the central point in the social programme of Lepidus. We know that the younger of the Gracchi had made

his name famous by granting once a month to needy Roman citizens a bushel of grain costing 6 asses and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  sesterces, which was enough to keep them alive for a week.

Then came Sulla, and with one stroke he abolished the *lex Sempronia*. Thereafter Lepidus appeared. It was not the timid half-measure of Caius Gracchus which he meant to restore. He had something much greater and more lasting in view. 'In place of the principle of reduced prices, Lepidus for the first time substituted that of gratuitous distributions and, moreover, extended it to the whole city.' It is in those words that J. Carcopino describes this reform, at the same time reproaching its promoter with 'imposing the ruinous burden of grain distributions upon the budget of the Republic', with a view to 'capturing the favour of the masses'. He adds: 'In order to keep it [this favour], he was no more sparing with his own enormous fortune than with the money of the State', a rather surprising gesture, coming as it did from an 'utter scoundrel', who surely would have contented himself with dipping into the public funds without touching his personal capital.

Such was the 'subversive programme' of Lepidus. As for his 'hatreds', it must at all events be admitted that far from concealing them he displayed them quite openly. He certainly changed his party more than once, alternating between Marius and Sulla. So did many others whose reputation for honesty and integrity has never been questioned on this account. But, unlike many others, he never made a secret of the game he was playing.

This then was the man who dominated the political scene in Rome in the spring of the year 78. He spoke of annulling all of Sulla's legislation with one stroke. He intended to recall all those who had been banished and to restore to them their property which had been confiscated or sold; he himself would set an example by declaring that he was ready to give back anything he had acquired at their expense. These appeals made an immense stir. A serious social upheaval was preparing. Sulla had been lavish in the bestowal of land upon his partisans and collaborators. Now preparations were being made to dispossess them all. In some regions the ex-legionaries of Sulla were being expelled from the estates with which their chief had rewarded them. It was only a beginning. A social revolution seemed to be imminent. The anti-Sullan movement was a threat to the aristocracy in general and might endanger the prerogatives of the Senate. The latter, conscious of its peril, determined to use every

means possible to safeguard the interests of birth and ownership ; that is why absolute powers were granted to Pompey, and the extraordinary authority which had been given him was renewed.

Lepidus was not supported by a strong homogeneous party. He had not succeeded in consolidating all the Marians, for the good reason that great confusion reigned among them and that some even of the more important adherents were perplexedly asking themselves whether they were still of the party, or what they were. . . . Learning of Caesar's return, Lepidus sent the son of Cinna, one of his first supporters, to sound him. Suetonius speaks of the ' magnificent offers ' made in the name of Lepidus by this young man to his brother-in-law. Caesar refused them all.

According to Suetonius, this refusal was made because Caesar was suspicious of the capabilities of Lepidus. He might have added that, once on the spot, Caesar realized that the former Sullan party was still a force to be reckoned with and that, thanks to the massive ' regroupings ' carried out by the deceased dictator, it still had a powerful majority in the Senate <sup>27</sup> and showed itself ready to defend its rights with desperate energy. The fact that Pompey had been given plenary powers seemed particularly significant. The struggle promised to be difficult and the proportions of the forces engaged made the issue extremely problematic. With a mature and considered judgment remarkable in a young man of twenty-two, Caesar determined to keep out of so risky an adventure. He preferred to *wait*.

In the meantime, as he had been away for three years, he had to renew his contact with public affairs into which he had scarcely had time to become initiated before his enforced departure from Rome in 81. For the moment, Caesar became an ordinary private citizen without any official position. Possibly, had he wished to make use of his nomination to the priesthood, he could have obtained the cancellation of the harsh measure which Sulla had taken against him. He did not do so, and this shows clearly that he did not care for that honour which would only have hindered the career he was preparing to follow. He turned his attention in the direction of the Forum, keeping a close watch for any opportunities of getting himself known. They soon came.

Cn. Cornelius Dolabella, a creature of Sulla, who had rewarded his zeal by having him made consul in 81, had just made a triumphal entry into Rome after gaining some rather vague and uncertain

military successes.<sup>28</sup> He had, however, managed to attract far more spectacular attention in another field. Having received the governorship of Macedonia at the expiration of his consular duties, he had given himself over to such plunder and embezzlement that even among his confrères past and present, who had nearly all indulged in similar practices in the course of their duties, he was felt to have grossly exceeded the limit generally accepted in such forms of activity. Judicial action was possible, but in order to start it off some citizen had to come forward as prosecutor, laying before the tribunal, in the form of a complaint, an outline of the indictment which he intended to pronounce against the accused.

We know that in the time of the Republic this practice was widespread among young Romans, who found in it an excellent method of making a name for themselves and of putting their oratorical powers to the test. It even happened, if the 'victim' did not wish to appear before his judges, that a withdrawal of the accusation, negotiated in time, could obtain considerable advantages for the would-be prosecutor.<sup>29</sup>

Caesar made his start by prosecuting the 'triumphant' hero of Macedonian fame. The cause was good and it had a double advantage. On the one hand, apart from any political considerations, Caesar was performing a praiseworthy action by summoning so flagrant a wrongdoer to appear before the Republican courts of law. On the other hand, the fact that he had chosen one of Sulla's most devoted lieutenants might be construed as a significant enough gesture directed against the survivors of the Sullan régime.

Caesar set to work very conscientiously. He instructed his correspondents to carry out a detailed inquiry on the spot. The inhabitants of the province made no difficulty about supplying plentiful information concerning the 'activity' of their former governor, and the dossier thus collected appeared overwhelming enough. Then Caesar began to draw up his *divinatio* which he had to present to the tribunal. A passage from Valerius Maximus leads us to the conclusion that for this work he drew largely upon one of the last speeches of his uncle Strabo. It is to be supposed that his formal indictment was favourably received by the competent judges since at the end of his speech he was officially accepted as the prosecutor of Cn. Cornelius Dolabella.

When this individual heard of the action to be brought against him, he was furious. He began by abusing his opponent before the whole Senate. Caesar's relations with the king of Bithynia served as

his pretext for using certain choice epithets reported by Suetonius and Cicero. Then he engaged two of the greatest lawyers of the time to defend him. The first was the illustrious Hortensius, who was then at the height of his glory, the second the eminent L. Aurelius Cotta, Caesar's own uncle, who had on a previous occasion intervened for him with Sulla.

What could an inexperienced young novice like Caesar hope for when he found himself confronted by these two famous masters of the Roman courts? Far from being intimidated, however, he accepted the unequal contest. At first his uncle, obviously embarrassed, left the field to his colleague Hortensius, whose skill and authority had no difficulty in disposing of the charges Caesar had prepared with such care. The disaster was complete when at the end of the debate L. Aurelius Cotta rose in his turn to make his closing speech. Dolabella was acquitted and Caesar left the court declaring that 'the speech for the defence by L. Aurelius Cotta had snatched from his hands the best possible of cases'.

This first setback did not discourage him. The very next year he made another attempt, under similar circumstances.

C. Antonius Hybrida, a fanatical follower of Sulla, had made himself conspicuous at the time of his leader's triumph by driving a four-in-hand chariot in the circus games which formed part of the official celebrations on that occasion. This won him the nickname of *quadrigarius*, which was not very flattering at that period. His military distinctions were of a very special character: at the head of a band of horsemen, during Sulla's campaign in Greece, he had pillaged a considerable number of cities both small and great. Now in the naïve hope of recovering the money and goods thus 'requisitioned', these cities were bringing a lawsuit against him and they entrusted Caesar with the defence of their cause.

We do not know what reasons led them to approach a jurist so lacking in fame and experience. It may be that the initiative came from Caesar himself, who, profiting by certain connections he had established with various Grecian cities during his previous case, had suggested to them the idea of trying their chances. This time, too, Caesar was very zealous in carrying out his duties as prosecutor. According to Plutarch, he spoke with great eloquence before the praetor M. Lucullus who was appointed to judge the case. The praetor recognized that the complaint was well founded, which was equivalent to a condemnation of C. Antonius. The latter, however, considering

that he had been denied justice, appealed to the people's tribunes and was acquitted. Once more Caesar lost his case.

On closer examination it will be seen that it is unfair to hold him responsible for this double setback. His speech against Dolabella must have made an excellent impression. At any rate, such ancient writers as Suetonius and Quintilian speak of it with the highest praise,<sup>30</sup> and, after all, to have been defeated in an oratorical battle where he was at grips with the two most eminent lawyers of the Roman courts was no dishonour. As far as the affair of C. Antonius is concerned, the fact that the praetor had declared Caesar's clients to be in the right proves that he had been persuasive and eloquent enough in presenting their case. If the acquittal of the plunderer followed that of the corrupt governor, it was merely because at that time Roman justice had reached a stage when such decisions seemed perfectly normal, since the judges in giving their verdict were only taking precautions against some day in the near or distant future when any one of them might find himself in a like situation.

Hence we should not presume that these two failures really damaged Caesar's reputation as an orator. But there were other things. The numerous friends and relations of Dolabella as well as those of C. Antonius, united by their common interest, could scarcely be anything but resentful of this 'nephew of Marius' who had distinguished himself by a course of action of which the hostile nature could not be disputed. At the same time his private life was becoming more and more notorious. The public was intrigued by his lavish extravagance. It was known that he had no personal fortune and that it was only thanks to systematic loans, obtained in almost every quarter, that he was able to keep going. These debts were growing with breath-taking rapidity. Plutarch tells us that before obtaining any office, Caesar was supposed to owe his creditors roughly 1,300 talents, or the equivalent of about £300,000. His conduct in Bithynia had given rise to severe criticism.<sup>31</sup> Public opinion was lenient in the matter of homosexuality between Roman citizens, but to 'prostitute oneself with a barbarian' was considered the height of infamy. Most serious of all, Caesar, braving his unsavoury reputation, had entered upon an endless series of feminine conquests and appeared to choose his mistresses from the best families of the capital, at the same time showing a marked preference for married women.<sup>32</sup>

One day it was learnt in Rome that this disturbing and irresistible seducer was leaving the city, accompanied by a numerous escort of



secretaries and slaves. Where was he going and what was the object of his journey?

Suetonius claims that Caesar made the decision to retire to Rhodes 'in order to escape both from hatred [of Dolabella] and, during this period of rest and inaction, to take lessons from Apollonius Molon, the most celebrated master of eloquence of his time'.

Modern historians, stressing the second part of this passage, have claimed that Caesar, disappointed after his unfortunate début at the bar, had intended to go to Rhodes to acquire the art of true oratory, in which he still felt himself to be deficient.

We have already pointed out that Caesar personally had no reason to be dissatisfied with his first speeches, nor to be so discouraged that he instantly decided upon a long and tiring journey in order once again to occupy a seat on the hard benches of a school of rhetoric. As for the 'hatred' of Dolabella, that certainly seems perfectly plausible. But we have to ask ourselves if Caesar would have thought it so serious and dangerous to his person that the only course open to him, as in the days of Sulla's proscriptions, was flight. This is hard to believe. Times had changed, and Dolabella was not Sulla.

Before going into this matter, it would be well to try to establish whether or not Caesar had the intention of going to Rhodes when he left Italy. Actually a study of his journey leads us to other conclusions.

We know that during the crossing Caesar was captured by pirates in the vicinity of the island of Pharmacuse near the coast of Asia Minor, north of Miletus.<sup>33</sup> After a look at the map one is entitled to ask why, if he were going directly to Rhodes, he should have been so near Miletus when he met the pirates. To answer this question we must assume that, contrary to the usual custom, after leaving some port on the Adriatic, Caesar made his first landing at Dyrrachium so as to pass from one end of Greece to the other before finally embarking for Rhodes at some port on the Aegean. If, on the other hand, he had followed the usual course which would have brought him straight from the Italian coast to Rhodes, we cannot understand why, off the Cyclades, he should have turned northwards, taking the opposite direction and travelling farther and farther away from the island chosen by the historians as his destination.

If, however, we try to place the end of his journey elsewhere, for instance in Bithynia, the problem is easily solved. Caesar was eight miles from Miletus when he fell into the hands of the pirates. Now the map shows us that Miletus is on the way which leads via Pergamos

straight to the kingdom of Nicomedes IV. This king had just died, bequeathing his country to the Roman Republic. An inventory of his estate was about to be made. There is every reason to believe that Caesar had not been forgotten in the will of his royal friend. Did he not himself proclaim later in front of the whole Senate that he was indebted to the king of Bithynia for numerous kindnesses? <sup>34</sup> It is here surely that the real reasons for his journey are to be found, but nevertheless it is not impossible that he conceived the idea of going to Rhodes on his way back in order to visit the famous rhetorician and to take the opportunity of attending some of his lectures.

## The Adventure

CAESAR's capture by the pirates provides the subject for some of the most picturesque and lively pages of Plutarch. The passage is quoted in all memoirs and it is not necessary to reproduce it here. All the same it is worth while to examine its historical value and, by a quick checking of the facts, to establish what belongs to history while eliminating the purely literary additions, though these form its principal charm.

We must begin with a definite statement : the fact itself appears to be incontestable, so does the place and so do the characters involved.

The discrepancy between the text and the reality starts after the departure of Caesar's emissaries in search of the required ransom, while he remained alone among the pirates except for his doctor and two servants. According to Plutarch, during the thirty-eight days of his captivity he was treated 'less as a prisoner than as a prince surrounded by his guards'. In return he treated his jailors 'with so much scorn that when he wanted to sleep he ordered them to observe a profound silence'. Better still : 'Confident of his safety he played and took his exercise with them, composed poems and speeches which he read to them, and when they did not show due appreciation he unsparingly abused them as ignorant barbarians.'

Where could Plutarch have obtained such precise and detailed information ? <sup>35</sup>

It is generally supposed that one of the three companions remaining with Caesar, his physician perhaps, noted down and afterwards published an account of the event which was later used by Plutarch, or at any rate by the writer who acted as his informant in the *Life of Caesar*. All this is very probable. We must, however, point out that, in the process, someone might easily have changed certain aspects of the situation. Whether it was the hypothetical doctor or Plutarch himself does not much matter. The fact remains that other, quite different versions were also circulated.

Velleius Paterculus, who wrote about a century before Plutarch, made use of material which the latter either did not know of or

neglected. He claims in particular that Caesar, while inspiring his jailors 'with as much fear as respect', nevertheless was constantly on his guard and anxiously avoided any gesture that might render him suspect. This caution went so far 'that Caesar never took off his shoes and never unfastened his belt, afraid that the slightest change in his habits might arouse the pirates' suspicions'. This was lest they should think he wished to make his escape by swimming.

Time passed and the ransom did not arrive. Certainly fifty talents was a considerable sum. Plutarch tells us (he is, however, alone in this opinion) that the pirates had only asked for twenty and that it was upon Caesar's own insistence that the amount was raised to fifty, on the grounds that a man such as himself was worth at least that price.<sup>36</sup>

Paradoxical as this version may appear, it is not entirely improbable, except for Caesar's alleged estimate of his own value, which is perhaps merely the product of an imaginative biographer anxious to please his readers.

Actually, what did it matter to Caesar if his ransom was fixed at twenty or fifty talents, since it was not he who had to produce the money? We know that this obligation was imposed by the Roman State upon the allied coastal cities, which were thus held financially responsible for every capture of Roman citizens in their locality. This rule, which at first sight might appear hard and exorbitant, was perfectly logical and in conformity with the most elementary principles of justice. As most of the persons engaged in the raids were drawn from among the inhabitants of these very cities and as they shared more or less directly in the benefits thus obtained, nothing was more reasonable than that they should be required to restore, even though indirectly, the gains acquired in such operations.

While he waited for his envoys to complete their tour through all the cities of the region and to collect the required sum, captivity weighed heavily upon the prisoner, who became impatient and, according to Suetonius, showed 'the most lively indignation'. This is easy enough to understand, since it was mid-winter and Caesar still found extremes of climate hard to endure.

At last the money arrived. The pirates received the ransom agreed upon and set their prisoner free. He then went on board the boat which had just brought his emissaries back from Miletus and returned to dry land. As for the pirates, fully satisfied no doubt with the result of their operations, instead of putting out to sea they thought fit to

celebrate the event by a feast worthy of the occasion. Little did they guess how highly imprudent they were being.

Generally the one idea of any captive regaining his liberty was to get away as soon as possible from the inauspicious regions. This was not the case with Caesar, and what followed shows the advantage he had in doubling, if not trebling, the amount of his ransom.

No sooner had he disembarked than he set about recruiting a band of bold adventurers who perhaps belonged to another clan, rivals of his former jailors. He armed some ships, and in the space of an afternoon he had succeeded in manning a regular battle fleet.

It is quite evident that considerable sums of money would be needed to obtain such a result. Now Caesar, after six weeks of captivity, had none at all. He was thus obliged to negotiate with the utmost subtlety and to use all possible inducements before he could succeed in convincing the men he was hiring that this operation, without entailing any great risks, would bring them substantial and immediate benefits. Here again his powers of persuasion, his skill in bringing convincing arguments to bear in the most delicate circumstances, must have served him in good stead. The improvised 'troops' agreed to fight on credit, and Caesar's 'squadron', taking advantage of the oncoming darkness, set sail without an instant's delay. They were able to surprise the pirates, who had not moved all day and were still in the roadstead off the island. During the battle which followed, some of the ships of the pirates, who had been taken unawares, were sunk, others fell into the hands of Caesar with all their booty. A few managed to get away.

Caesar had every reason to be pleased with the result of this engagement; it had brought him a considerable number of prisoners and a huge booty, at the same time enabling him to recover within a few hours the fifty talents paid by the allied municipalities for his liberation.

Once the expenses of the expedition were covered Caesar meant to enjoy his gains in conformity with the rules of strictest legality. But first he decided to take revenge on his jailors, now prisoners in his hands, and to make them pay dearly for the five weeks of captivity they had inflicted upon him. This is why he immediately got into touch with the chief government representative in the region, J. Silanus,<sup>37</sup> proconsul of the Asian province. Normally resident at Pergamos he had gone to Bithynia where he was engaged in making the inventory of the estate of Nicomedes IV. As soon as he learnt

this, Caesar followed him there, leaving his prisoners in custody at Pergamos.

We know very little about his interview with the proconsul. Plutarch merely reports that Silanus, who as chief magistrate of Asia should have taken steps to punish the pirates, 'after having taken a covetous glance at their wealth which was considerable' replied to Caesar that he would consider at his leisure what he would do with the captives. Velleius Paterculus presents the case rather differently. According to him, Caesar asked permission to have the prisoners executed, but he, 'no less envious than cowardly', declared that he would have them sold. This version seems nearer to the truth. At any rate, we know that Silanus, not trusting Caesar, took care to send direct orders to Pergamos to proceed with the sale. His messenger arrived too late. Caesar, who was bent above all on fulfilling the promise made in apparent jest to his jailers during his captivity, had returned post-haste to Pergamos, and, paying scant attention to the opinion expressed by the proconsul, on his own authority had the prisoners hanged, if we can believe Plutarch. Velleius Paterculus and later Valerius Maximus say that he had them crucified, which after all comes to the same thing.

The text of Velleius Paterculus deserves to be re-read with careful attention: 'No less envious than cowardly . . .' What exactly is the meaning of these words which express such severe judgment of the proconsul of Asia? It is easy enough to understand that he was *envious* on learning of the rich booty which was to fall into the hands of Caesar as a result of his bold step. The term *cowardly*, however, which Velleius sees fit to apply to this high magistrate, allows us to see a little further. If Silanus appeared comparatively merciful by announcing his intention of sparing the lives of the captured pirates, it was perhaps because he feared their survivors' vengeance. Another hypothesis which suggests itself is quite as plausible, if not more so. It is possible that this eminent personage was the first to be interested in the safety of these 'partners', whose productive 'work' was a valuable source of income for himself, provided he knew how to keep his eyes shut at the right moment and avoided any excessive severity when destiny placed their fate in his hands.

The passage which follows in Velleius' account throws a faint but curious light on one aspect of this delicate problem which remains discreetly shrouded in a veil of obstinate secrecy. It reads:

'It would take too long to recall all the bold projects he [Caesar]

conceived, and all that the cowardly proconsul of Asia did in order to make them fail.'

We can but regret the lack of more precise information about these 'bold projects' conceived by Caesar. All we can do is to hazard a few guesses which, of course, cannot be proved. We could not be far from the truth, however, in supposing that Caesar did not intend to dismiss his forces, but rather to try to persevere in the way he had begun, while enlarging his field of activity with the support of government troops. In other words, he would follow up, on his own account and in another sector, the punitive mission with which the government had previously entrusted P. Servilius Isauricus and which was soon to fall to his future associate and rival Pompey. The 'baseness' of the proconsul of Asia thus resulted in preventing the realization of a plan which might have completely altered the direction of Caesar's career in the years that were to come.

Having satisfied his vengeance, Caesar once more returned to Bithynia. This time it was a private affair which took him there. We have no exact information as to its nature, but we may assume from the fragment of a speech preserved by Aulus Gellius that, in accordance with the wishes of his dead friend, Caesar hastened to take up the defence of some natives who had probably belonged to the immediate entourage of Nicomedes IV and with whom he had become acquainted during his first visit to the king's court. The opening sentences of Caesar's speech delivered before the same proconsul Silanus, this time presiding as a judge, leads us to conclude that Caesar had come to take the place of a previously appointed defender. 'The hospitality which I have received from King Nicomedes,' he declared, 'the friendship which binds me to those whose case is now to be tried, made it impossible for me to leave to another the task of defending them.' And then he added these words which deserve to be reproduced in full because they reflect for us his conception of the rights and duties of a Roman citizen :

'The memory of the dead should be religiously preserved in the hearts of their near relations ; and we cannot neglect our duties to a client without covering ourselves with shame. Our obligations to a client are so sacred that they come immediately after our duties to our near relations.' <sup>38</sup>

We do not know the outcome of this trial.

There is every reason to think that in so generously taking up the defence of other people's interests Caesar had no intention of neglecting

his own. The details of the will of Nicomedes are not known, but, as we suggested above, everything leads us to suppose that the king of Bithynia had shown himself very generous to his Roman friend.

From now on, after a fairly long period of financial difficulties, Caesar found himself in possession of a considerable fortune. The liberality of Nicomedes and the booty snatched from the pirates had helped to fill his money chests. They were not long to remain locked.

In the meantime he was going to spend a few days at Rhodes with the learned Molon. Of his stay in this island we know nothing except that it was brief. The third war of Mithridates had just begun and offered Caesar an excellent opportunity for displaying his energy. As it turned out, he was able to employ the same methods which had succeeded so well in his expedition against the pirates. He equipped at his own expense a sort of independent company and, on the pretext of 'holding the weak and wavering cities to their duties', he began to wage war against those towns which showed little eagerness to fight on the side of and for the cause of Rome. We know only too well what was meant at that time by repressing an attempt at insubordination and by correcting the behaviour of any city which had shown some trifling signs of independence. Suetonius attributes to him in this connection an action of real warfare. According to his account, Caesar's 'auxiliary troops' (this is how he describes the miscellaneous elements which had been gathered together) succeeded in driving out of the province an enemy unit which had penetrated into it. Although he is the only one to mention this fact, it seems quite credible. Armed bands belonging to Mithridates' forces frequently made incursions into the regions occupied by the Romans; such attacks were part of a regular plan of campaign which the king of Pontus had been following for years. Caesar's exploit does not seem to have made much difference to the general development of military operations. At any rate, the Roman high command did not see fit to lend an official character to Caesar's 'collaboration' nor to recognize the company which he had formed as one of the regular units of the army of the Republic. Moreover, once again, we have before us an enterprise which lasted only a short time and ended abruptly and unexpectedly, without leaving any traces.



## *From the College of Pontiffs to the Tribune of the Forum*

**N**O matter where Caesar's destiny took him, it was his regular practice to keep as close a contact as possible with Rome. He always managed to have a number of correspondents who from more or less disinterested motives made it their business to keep in him touch with all that was happening in the capital. It was thus that one day, in the midst of his war-like activities, he received a letter announcing the death of his uncle C. Aurelius Cotta and his own nomination to the place which had now become vacant in the College of Pontiffs. Caesar immediately left his troops and hurried back to Italy.

This decision, which might seem utterly inconsistent with his attitude on a previous occasion when the question of his reinstatement as a *flamen* had been raised, needs a word of explanation.

We have seen that on his return to Rome, at the time of Sulla's death, Caesar had refrained from claiming his right to the office from which the enraged dictator had excluded him. The arbitrary measure might easily have been annulled later. If Caesar made not the slightest effort to regain the post he had formerly held, it was doubtless because, for reasons which we have already explained, he did not want it.

It was quite another matter to become a member of the College of Pontiffs. This nomination would not hamper his liberty of action and would in no way hinder the normal course of his career. It offered nothing but advantages—a position which was well thought of in official circles and was sheltered from the changes and chances of politics and from party rivalries. In addition, there was the highly tempting prospect of being able one day to stand as candidate for the office of *pontifex maximus* which, in the spiritual domain, was considered as the highest dignity of the State and surrounded with unequalled prestige.

We are entitled to ask how, and for what reasons, Caesar, who had been away from Rome and so far had had no opportunity of

distinguishing himself in any field, should have been invited to sit in so venerable an assembly.

In examining the nature of this institution and the privileges of its members we shall find an answer to the question which at first sight seems perplexing enough.

Tradition attributes to King Numa Pompilius the creation of a council of theologians whose task it was to watch over the purity of dogma and to enlighten him, in his capacity as head of the Roman religion, by their special knowledge of pontifical jurisprudence. This council survived the fall of the kings, and its members were henceforth admitted by co-option and appointed for life. In 104, at the suggestion of the tribune of the people Cn. Domitius, the co-option was replaced by election in the *comitia*, but the College kept the right of presenting the candidates for whom the people's assembly voted. Sulla repealed the law of Domitius and re-established co-option, which had gradually become a convenient way of handing on the priestly powers by heredity. Caesar's uncle, Strabo, had figured among the members of the College, and so had C. Aurelius Cotta, an uncle on his mother's side. After the latter's unexpected death, on the eve of the triumph in his honour in the year 74, Caesar's mother, judging that her son was clearly destined to occupy the place left vacant by her brother's death, must doubtless have taken urgent measures to intervene with the influential electors of the College: the *pontifex maximus* Metellus Pius, the prince of the Senate Q. Lutatius Catulus, P. Servilius Isauricus, under whose command Caesar had formerly served in Cilicia, etc. The intervention of his cousin, the *flamen Quirinalis*, may also have been effective: he alone among the *flamines*, representing the most ancient and firmly established cult, had succeeded in holding off the growing sacerdotal claims of the pontiffs and in keeping all his authority. So it finally came about that Caesar, at the age of twenty-six, was called to take a place in this distinguished council composed of illustrious old men loaded with years and glory.<sup>89</sup>

It is not surprising that as soon as he heard of his nomination, Caesar's sole idea was to return as soon as possible to Rome. There was just one trouble: the journey entailed a fairly long crossing and there was every reason to fear the pirates who, in spite of the efforts of the Roman authorities, continued to enlarge the field of their operations more and more. Caesar had strong grounds for thinking that since the famous adventure at Miletus he had become quite well

known in those parts and that this time, if he fell into their hands, his fate would be sealed.

That is why, in order to reduce the risks of his journey to a minimum, he travelled by land through Greece and, on reaching the coast of the Adriatic, hired a modest little rowing boat with four oars, hoping thus to be able to pass unnoticed and to escape the vigilance of his enemies.

'It was in a frail enough vessel', writes Velleius Paterculus, 'that he crossed the whole breadth of the Adriatic. On the way he thought he saw the pirate ships; immediately, he took off his clothes, and, fastening a poniard to his side, prepared himself for whatever might come. But soon he realized that he had been mistaken and that what he had believed were the masts of ships were a row of trees appearing on the horizon.'

All these details are worth noticing. They enable us to understand the transformation which time and experience had wrought in the character and physical capacities of Caesar. They show how the weakly youth, who fell ill as soon as he was deprived of his comfortable bed for a few nights, had become a hardened navigator braving distant travels and extremities of climate. In the space of seven years he had crossed from Italy to Asia Minor four times and had been all over Cilicia, Bithynia, Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus. It would be perhaps too much to say that he finished by liking this wandering existence; the fact that he was in such a hurry to give it up at the first opportunity in order to resume his easy pleasant life in Rome rather goes to prove the opposite. But he had learnt not to be deterred by physical effort and not to fear it when circumstances made it necessary.

Hardly had he entered the College of Pontiffs when he was devoured by a new ambition. Making the most of his military qualifications—his post of *contubernalis* on the staff of M. Minucius Thermus, the civic crown which had been awarded to him, and his achievements at the head of his free company—Caesar presented himself as a candidate for the office of military tribune.

We know that in Rome, under the Republic, the military tribunes were appointed annually and, like all other magistrates, started their term at the beginning of the year. Originally they were chosen by the consuls. Then the people claimed the right to nominate them and, after the year 207 they were all, to the number of twenty-four, elected in the *comitia*, in the capacity of magistrates of the Roman people. Those who began their political career in this way were

usually young men of good family. The dignity was even conferred on candidates who had not the slightest intention of devoting themselves to a career of arms. They would content themselves to serve for half a year (*tribunatus semestris*), after which they returned to private life in possession of the alluring title 'Military Tribune of the People'.<sup>40</sup> Such was in all probability the case with Caesar. At any rate, if it is certain that he was called to this office, we can also admit that his nomination was not followed by his appointment to an active military command and that he limited himself to performing his duties for the prescribed half year, probably in the service of the administration, perhaps in the recruiting offices which dealt with the formation of newly conscripted legions.

No traces of information have been left us of his activity as military tribune. On the other hand, there is conclusive evidence to prove that at this very time, while the Roman armies were engaged in hard battles on three different fronts, Caesar did not leave the capital and continued to carry on his political activities. This evidence is found in Suetonius who writes :

'During his military tribuneship, he [Caesar] helped with all his might those who were trying to restore the power of the tribunes.'

Caesar's term of office was in the year 73. During that same year the people's tribune C. Licinius Macer had attracted attention by his campaign to re-establish the rights of the tribunes of the people, and it is clear that Caesar sided with him. But before speaking of the part which he played in that enterprise, it would be well to point to another of Caesar's political actions which preceded it.

This has to do with his intervention in favour of the law of Plautius. The tribune Plautius, who was sponsoring this measure, called together a *contio* in order to inform the people of his project before putting it to the vote in the *comitia*.<sup>41</sup> Public meetings of this kind corresponded to one of the fundamental principles of the Roman Republic, which advocated that the opinion of the people should be sought as often as possible. Sulla, fully aware of the danger of such gatherings to the autocratic régime which he had set up, prohibited them. After his death they were reinstituted and Plautius was one of the first to make use of them.

The meeting which he called at the beginning of the year 73 in the Flaminian Circus, the usual place for such assemblies, was intended to obtain the approval of the public for his plan to hasten the return to Rome of the political exiles banished during Sulla's régime. Among

these was L. Cinna, the brother-in-law of Caesar, who thus had a pretext for making a speech in the course of the meeting.

It was the first time Caesar had spoken from the public tribune to the Roman people. The prudence with which he proceeded was significant. It was not to defend the cause of a proscribed political party that he raised his voice. It was to ease the fate of one of his close relations that he spoke, and he added in conclusion: 'I think I have expended all the zeal, all the energy, all the diligence which our kinship demands.'

It is to be supposed that this oratorical intervention on the part of Caesar had been previously agreed upon with the tribune Plautius who, in accordance with the usual custom, presided over the meeting called on his initiative. Caesar's relations with the tribune C. Licinius Macer date from that same period. Other agreements were soon to follow. Henceforth he was to use this method of political action more and more, and in his hands it became a highly effective instrument. In gaining the support of a certain number of more or less disinterested tribunes of the people, Caesar had established the first outposts of his power.

It was by a slow process of evolution which had lasted for at least two centuries that these revolutionary leaders of the Roman people had, little by little, acquired their power. Their long battle against the patricians had on numerous occasions assumed the character of a regular class war. It ended in the admission of the people to all magistracies, in an easing of the laws on debts, and in the formation of a kind of new nobility—this time plebeian (*lex Hortensia* 289–286).

Although by this time the tribunes of the people had lost their revolutionary character and were henceforth considered as titular magistrates, yet they constantly tended to favour the democratic party and the reforms it advocated, at the expense of the aristocracy and the Senate.

Therefore one of Sulla's most urgent tasks as soon as he seized power was the systematic reduction of the tribunes' power. He checked the right of intercession by threatening a fine so enormous that, for all practical purposes, it became impossible to exercise it. Plebiscites had to be authorized beforehand by the Senate, and the former ineligibility of tribunes for the office of consul, praetor or aedile was re-affirmed.

After Sulla's abdication the restoration of the rights and prerogatives of the people's tribunes was placed at the head of the democratic party's

demands. Sallust tells us that the tribune Cn. Sicinius was the first 'to have dared to speak about the power of the tribunes' (in 76). He died a victim of 'patrician perfidy'.<sup>42</sup> Quintus Opimius, tribune of the people in 75, continued his work. He succeeded in wresting from the Senate a law which removed the ban debarring the tribunes from holding high public offices. But his campaign against the limitation of the *intercessio* was unfortunate. Called the following year to appear before the praetorial tribunal, he was given so heavy a fine that he was unable to pay and all his goods were confiscated, which entailed the loss of his civic rights.

One of the consuls of that year, C. Aurelius Cotta, judging that, after all, the time had come to grant the plebs some compensations which would prove the good will of the Senate and the paternal care with which it watched over the people's welfare, was able to make the assembly vote two measures intended to stop the dangerous ever increasing cost of living and the lack of supplies. The first specified that thereafter the renewal of State contracts should be carried out by consuls, and not by the censors. The second decreed that the granting of State licences to tax-collectors in Sicily should in future be made from Rome (also by the consuls) and not locally. These were ridiculously inadequate measures which only affected certain financial groups directly interested in the exploitation of public taxes and the delivery of provisions to the State. Nevertheless the fact itself could not be dismissed: a way was opened for concessions, a start had been made which called for something further. It was not long before it came. Economic conditions were deplorable. This was reflected in a severe food shortage which reached its climax in 73. For five years the remedies suggested by Lepidus had been neglected and belittled. Now it was becoming obvious that they were inevitable and must be adopted willy-nilly. So it came about that the consuls M. Terentius Varro Lucullus and C. Cassius Longinus, in the hopes of calming popular excitement, were obliged to bring in a law which recognized the principle—condemned at the time of Lepidus as 'subversive' and 'demagogic'—of free distributions of wheat, fixing the minimum at five *modii* (just over a bushel) a month per head. The number of beneficiaries was set at 40,000.<sup>43</sup>

Again, the measures were too little and too late. Not only was the specified quantity of corn quite insufficient, but the number of recipients was fixed far too low and did not in any way correspond to the actual percentage of the population in dire need of help. Hence

the widespread disappointment which expressed itself in renewed agitation among the populace.

The tribune C. Licinius Macer made use of this opportunity by reopening, with greater vigour than his predecessors, the campaign to increase the tribunes' powers. The wholesale return of the exiled partisans of Marius, following the recent enactment of the *lex Plautia*, considerably swelled the number of his supporters with experienced militant politicians.

A great public gathering was organized, in the course of which Licinius made a long and important speech reported by Sallust in the first book of his *Historiae*, of which some passages have come down to us. Admittedly, this version cannot be guaranteed to be perfectly accurate and the writer may very likely have taken certain liberties in his interpretation of the actual text of the speech or of the notes taken during the meeting. At the same time we must not forget that he was writing a very short time after the actual events and that most of his readers had been present at this oratorical demonstration, so that it would have been impossible for him to give a completely fanciful or erroneous presentation of it. Having said this, let us listen to Sallust.

'Alone, with no power but the vain shadow of a magistracy', Licinius attacked the aristocracy. His object was 'to bring its domination to an end'. He did not hide from himself the difficulties of his task nor the serious danger he was running, but he considered that 'it is better for a man of spirit to fight for liberty and be defeated than not to fight at all!'

The truths which he was to proclaim to his followers were hard but incontrovertible :

'All those who were elected to defend your rights have used their influence and their authority against you. . . . In our civil wars neither side has fought for anything but to enslave you. . . . A few men, thanks to their military reputation, have been able to seize the treasury, the army, the kingdoms and provinces and have built a rampart out of your ruins, while you, the multitude, like a flock of sheep, give yourselves up to each one of them as mere chattels which they can use at their good pleasure. . . . Your power of suffrage which formerly gave you leaders now merely gives you masters.' To those who were satisfied with the existing state of affairs and thought they could enjoy their freedom 'because they have escaped the lictor's rod' he addressed this solemn and prophetic exhortation :

'I implore, you not to start changing the names of things to suit your own cowardly spirit by calling servitude tranquillity. If crime triumphs over right and honour, tranquillity will scarcely be your lot.'

He had an answer ready for the question he anticipated: 'Then what do you want?' There must be no open resistance, no new civil war, but, if the adversary persists in his refusal to meet the just demands of the people, 'you must content yourselves with no longer giving your blood'. He was in fact asking for a strike against military conscription. No concessions, no soldiers: this was the ultimatum which must be given to the nobles. Moreover, the complaints of the people could not be silenced by the improvised law concerning means of subsistence, a law which granted them 'only just enough to keep them from starving, while their strength is ebbing'. But even if the food ration had been adequate, the people should not imagine 'that any gratitude is due to the insolence of those who *give them what is theirs by right*'.

Thus spoke the man whose programme had Caesar's entire approval, since, according to Suetonius, he helped him 'with all his power'.

We should like to try to determine the actual extent of this power. At this time Caesar held two public offices diametrically opposed to each other. He was both pontiff and military tribune. The influence given him by these two posts, in spite of the distinction they conferred upon him, had a very limited range. It scarcely touched those active political elements whose weight alone affected the balance of ambitions and party rivalries in Rome. It was by his private everyday actions, by his talent for capturing the people's confidence, by the peculiar charm which had nothing to do with his official prestige but emanated from his personality that, on returning to Rome, Caesar managed to gain devoted followers and to rouse warm sympathies among a great number of people from the most varied circles of the capital, and often for totally different reasons. Dion Cassius has made some singular comments on the tactics Caesar employed at this time.

'No one', writes this author, 'resigned himself more promptly than Caesar to courting and flattering the least esteemed people. He did not shrink from any speech or action which might help him to gain the object of his ambition. Little did he care if he had to lower himself for the moment, provided that this abasement would make him powerful later on. Accordingly he sought to win over as though they were his superiors, those whom he hoped afterwards to control.'

The following lines from Plutarch complement and confirm the



passage just quoted : ' His affability, his good manners, the courteous way in which he welcomed everybody were remarkable for his age, and it was these qualities which had gained him the affection of the people.'

This power which Caesar had over the multitude made his collaboration infinitely valuable. We have seen that he gave his support to two tribunes of the people. It would be interesting to know if any other similar instances followed. Unfortunately there is an absolute silence on this matter. For three years Caesar completely disappears from our sight. No indication concerning him, no mention of his name in the interval between the years 72-70 is made by any of the ancient historians. As for the hypotheses of the moderns, they have the same value as any other product of the imagination with absolutely no facts to support it. It is certainly permissible to express surprise at finding that Caesar, now almost thirty, was content to remain inactive while his country was living through the darkest days of its history. Some historians refuse to admit that while the troops of Spartacus were advancing on Rome after crushing the armies sent by the Republic to meet them, Caesar was leading a life of leisure devoted to the subtle game of internal politics. We must however resign ourselves to this fact. If it had been possible to trace the slightest hint of Caesar's participation in the military campaigns of this period, his biographers would not have omitted to draw attention to it in one way or another, for they have never failed to note his every movement and action—even the most insignificant. So if they say nothing, it just means, quite simply, that in this domain there was nothing to say.

## Two Deaths . Two Speeches

WE have to wait till the year 68 for Caesar to reappear. In the course of this year his aunt Julia died, and he organized a demonstration which attracted a good deal of attention.

The widow of the great Marius died quietly in her place of retirement, leaving the care of her obsequies in all probability to her nephew. Referring to the precedent created by his colleague at the College of Pontiffs, Q. Lutatius Catulus when arranging for the funeral of his mother some thirty years earlier, Caesar asked that the honour of a public *laudatio* be accorded to his aunt,<sup>44</sup> and his request was granted.

Accordingly, on the day of the ceremony, a solemn procession set out from the house of the deceased in the direction of the Forum.<sup>45</sup> As usual, a band of musicians came first, making the air ring with their lugubrious and heart-rending strains;<sup>46</sup> then the choir,<sup>47</sup> pouring out the usual lamentations; then whirling dancers and quaint mummers; and, lastly, the ancestral *imagines* worn by performers specially hired for such occasions.

It was at this moment that the crowds thronging the route were dumbfounded and dazzled to behold the effigy of the great Marius, majestically draped in the folds of his toga *praetexta*, adorned with all the splendour of his official insignia, and accompanied by an impressive escort of lictors befitting his rank and honour.

It was the first time that his mask, brought from the family niche where it had been placed in the year 86, had been seen in public since the day when Sulla declared him to be an enemy of the country and forbade any exhibition of his effigy at official ceremonies.

Ignoring the prohibition, Caesar now paraded before the wondering eyes of the Romans the likeness of this glorious captain of whom he was proud to be the nephew. It seems that murmuring could be heard from some of the onlookers, but it was quickly drowned in the enthusiastic acclamation of the populace.

On reaching the Forum the procession stops before the rostra. The bed on which the deceased is lying is placed in front of the orator's

tribune. The bearers of the ancestral masks come down from their chariots and take their places on little ivory stools ; the assistants form a circle round them. Caesar goes up on to the platform.

Before this assembly of the dead he is going to evoke the divine origin of their family. Those waxen faces, with their fixed, motionless expressions are to be illuminated by the rays of their own glory. Listen then, great Marius ; listen, consul Sextus ; listen, praetor Lucius ; listen, all you members of the ancient line of the Julians, fathers, sons, grandsons, uncles and nephews ; hear once more of the incomparable, the unique splendour of your origin.

‘On her mother’s side my aunt Julia is descended from the kings ; on her father’s, from the immortals. The Marcii Reges issued from Aneus Marcius, and her mother bore their name. The gens Julia are descended from Venus and we are a branch of this family . . .’

Except for the brief fragment quoted from Suetonius, we know nothing of what Caesar said in his oration. The fact that this author was able to record an extract suggests that its text had been preserved. We know that speeches of this kind, usually kept in the family archives, were often made public and circulated. It was therefore quite possible to note down certain passages. It has recently been claimed that it was Caesar’s intention to use the funeral as a pretext for taking upon himself the vindication of Marius’ political achievement. Considering that we are totally ignorant as to the content of the speech apart from the passage given by Suetonius, it seems quite useless to try to establish exactly what its theme was. We can be pretty sure that it also had to do with the husband of the deceased, but what Caesar actually said about him and what ground he covered we shall never know.

In commenting on the part of the speech which has been preserved, Drumann has tried to detect a very clever calculation on Caesar’s part. While he was publicly exalting the double nobility of his lineage, Caesar might have intended to prove to the listening populace that his family, through the union of one of its daughters to a man of humble birth, had formed an indestructible alliance with democracy, and that it was for him, the descendant of gods and kings and yet the nephew of a simple peasant of Arpinum, to be the incarnation of this alliance and to bring it fresh lustre. This seems to me just another far-fetched theory artificially forged to make up for the surprising lack of information about this period of Caesar’s life. It is characterized by the same fault as many other suggestions and hypotheses put forward by his modern biographers, eager to fill the

regrettable gaps in the documents relating to Caesar—the fault of replacing the silence of the texts by the language of imagination.

Modern historians in general have made a great deal of this spectacular performance, which was admittedly brilliant, but of which the importance seems to have been grossly exaggerated. Without robbing it of any of its real significance, we must see it in its true proportions. The risk run by Caesar was not so great as all that—Sulla was dead and there was nothing to fear from his anger. Even if the prohibition was still supposed to be in force, it only had to do with public festivals and ceremonies. A funeral procession need not necessarily come under its ruling. It is true that the public *laudatio* had deprived this procession of its strictly intimate character, but this does not seem to have been thought important enough to necessitate any action against the organizer of the ceremony. And, in fact, Caesar met with no trouble in this connection.

Several weeks went by and again, in similar circumstances, Caesar mounted the steps leading to the orator's tribune. This time it was the funeral oration for his wife which he was to deliver. 'She died very young,' says Plutarch. She must have been between twenty-eight and thirty when her earthly existence came to an end. Modest and retiring, she skims across Caesar's early years, scarcely ruffling them in her passage. She seems to have been extremely attractive, however, and touching in her self-effacement. Married in accordance with her father's wishes to a young man totally unknown to her and who, on his side also, was merely conforming to an imposed choice, she managed very quickly to gain his affections to such a degree that, rather than leave her, he dared to face the anger of the all-powerful dictator. After giving birth to a child during the first year of her marriage, she spent the following years separated from her husband, who was obliged to keep away from Rome. When at last Caesar returned, a happy life seemed to be opening before her. Happy? One wonders—especially after consulting Suetonius' list of Caesar's mistresses who for the most part appear to belong to this period. Was she unaware of her husband's infidelities? This is very improbable, living as she did in Rome, in a circle where everything was known and where news and gossip were exchanged all day long from one end of the town to the other. But knowing about it, what else could she do except be silent and accept resignedly the common lot of all Roman women in her circle?

As though he wished to pay off a debt of gratitude to her, Caesar

insisted on honouring her memory with a public oration, which up till now had been reserved for women of a more advanced age. It was the first time that the praises of so young a woman had been sounded from the rostra.

‘This innovation’, writes Plutarch, ‘did him honour, won him public favour, and endeared him to the multitude, who took such sensibility to be the mark of a gentle and kindly disposition.’

## Quaestor in Spain

IN the course of the same year Caesar was at last able to inaugurate his career as a magistrate: he was nominated by the *comitia* to the post of quaestor, the first stage on the road to public authority in the Roman Republic.

Theoretically, this post required solid technical knowledge, and carried with it numerous obligations. The quaestors were primarily custodians of the State's treasury. They collected the taxes, the levies made upon vanquished enemies or allies in time of war, the sums raised by legal fines and confiscation or deriving from rents and transfers of public property. They allocated money to the military leaders for their troops, they remunerated State servants, they supervised the sale of booty brought back by the generals from their expeditions.<sup>48</sup>

It is clear that this office was anything but a sinecure, and it is enough to recall how hard Cato went to work before assuming its responsibilities, in order to realize its importance and the difficulties it presented.

But . . . then, as at all other times, a way had been found in Rome of resolving this delicate problem effectively and discreetly. In practice, the quaestors' offices were administered by permanent officials. Plutarch speaks of them with praiseworthy frankness: 'Since they always handled the account books and the laws on finance, they took advantage of the ignorance and inexperience of the young quaestors who needed instruction in their duties. These officials therefore left them no authority and were themselves the real quaestors.'

At the outset Caesar was not fortunate. Instead of an urban quaestorship in Rome, without undue inconvenience, that of Further Spain fell to his lot. This had the disadvantage of keeping him far away from the capital for a whole year, besides loading him with business as irksome as it was exacting. He had to place himself entirely at the disposal of the magistrate whom he was appointed to help, ever ready to carry out whatever mission this official might see

fit to entrust to him. He also had to be prepared to take the magistrate's place if necessary, either under orders or by virtue of his office.

Caesar arrived in Spain just after the termination of a conflict which had lasted for eight consecutive years (80-72). The province had enjoyed half a century of peace, following the terrible siege of Numantia, when a former lieutenant of Marius, seeking refuge in Spain from the persecution of Sulla, started a guerrilla war which soon flared up into a vast conflagration. This was the beginning of a misunderstanding which lasted a long time and caused much bloodshed: the Spaniards thought that in Sertorius they had found an ardent champion of their independence. As for Sertorius himself, all he had in view was to establish a dissident government and, if he succeeded, to make use of the country as a spring-board from which he could attack and conquer Rome. Once the oligarchy of the Senate was crushed, he would have taken its place and the yoke of Rome would have weighed no less heavily upon Spain than in the past.

A period of comparative calm had followed the assassination of Sertorius, and the Romanization of the country continued under conditions more or less normal. Since 197 the territory had been divided into two provinces: Nearer Spain and Further Spain. It was to the latter that the *propraetor* Antistius Vetus<sup>49</sup> was appointed, and Caesar found himself placed under his orders. This province comprised four main towns, each with a court of jurisdiction: Gades (Cadiz), Corduba (Cordova), Hispalis (Seville), Astigi (Ecija). Pliny counts one hundred and seventy-five cities in all, of which nine were colonies, eight municipalities, twenty-nine towns enjoying Latin rights, six free cities, three allied, and a hundred and twenty tributary.

We must bear this list in mind if we wish to get an idea of the amount of work which fell to Caesar in the exercise of his duties. The colonies which lived by the laws of Rome needed a special and separate system of book-keeping. The so-called municipalities, which observed their own laws and enjoyed the privilege of their own municipal administration, each had a particular way of keeping accounts. It was for Caesar to familiarize himself with it all and to clarify this complicated organization. The towns possessing Latin rights offered yet another peculiarity: their inhabitants were eligible for service in the Roman legions and could be promoted to any rank, which again entailed a special system of book-keeping. The free cities which were like the municipalities in respect to their internal legislation were, all the same, less favoured because they had neither Roman nor

Latin rights. As for the cities known as 'allies', which fortunately were not numerous, each one was governed in accordance with the particular treaty which bound it to the Roman State, all the clauses and stipulations of each separate treaty had to be known. Finally, there was the biggest task of all: the collecting of dues from the hundred and twenty tributary cities which, there is every reason to think, were not all equally eager to meet their obligations. Moreover, as if this was not enough to keep his assistant busy, the praetor entrusted him with the task of administering justice in his name. Caesar was thus obliged to tour the entire province, and to preside in each of the four centres of jurisdiction over a 'committee of justice' composed of Roman citizens and acting in some sort as a court of appeal for cases tried in local courts.

It is during one of these judiciary tours that Suetonius places the well-known anecdote which is so valuable to our narrative that I shall quote it in full:

Having come to Gades, Caesar noticed a statue of Alexander the Great near the temple of Hercules. Thereupon he began to groan, and, as though sickened by his inaction, thinking that he had as yet done nothing worthy of note at an age when Alexander had already conquered the whole world, he immediately asked for leave of absence so that he might go to Rome and there seize the first available opportunity for distinguishing himself.<sup>50</sup>

In this romanticized story,<sup>51</sup> which none of Caesar's biographers so far have spared their readers, only one thing appears absolutely certain: Caesar left Spain without having the patience to wait for the legal expiration of his appointment. We thus have good grounds for concluding that he did not find any particular satisfaction in it, and that he judged he could be doing something better.

We might ask why, in that case, had he put in for it? For, after all, he must have known what the duties of a quaestor consisted of, and he must have foreseen what was awaiting him.

The answer is probably that he had hoped for an urban quaestorship which would have enabled him to enjoy all the advantages of his office without being obliged to leave the capital; but above all we must never lose sight of the chief object of his desire—a seat in the Senate which was assured by his election as quaestor, for the doors of the august assembly opened automatically to all who had been appointed to that first magisterial office.



Caesar must have been perfectly aware of his precarious position as a public orator, always at the mercy of the changing mood of the populace, and he realized how much more weight his words would carry if they rang out within the precincts of the Senate. But in order to make use of this advantage, he needed to be on the spot instead of vegetating far away in an uncivilized country and passing his time in the performance of tedious administrative duties. So he made his decision and returned to Rome.

But why this feverish haste? What reasons prevented him from waiting patiently a few months longer, until the day when his appointment would come to an end in the regular way?

None of the ancient historians give an answer to this question, but it is possible to proceed here by way of deduction. First of all, in what direction did he go?

We read in Suetonius: 'Leaving his province before the time specified by law, he went to visit the Latin colonies which were clamouring to obtain city rights.'

This 'visit' had a very definite object. The towns north of the Po—Milan, Cremona, Verona, etc.—were in a state of upheaval. They were claiming city rights, in other words full civic rights instead of the *jus Latii* which had been granted them in 89 by Pompeius Strabo.<sup>52</sup> According to Suetonius, Caesar 'would have encouraged them to take violent action, if the consuls, anticipating his plans, had not temporarily kept back the legions enrolled for Cilicia'.

These lines show us Caesar in a new light. Formerly he had refused to follow Lepidus' call to civil war. Now, on his own initiative, he was fomenting agitation among the cities north of the Po<sup>53</sup> and inciting them to a revolt which, if successful, would have dealt the Senate a fatal blow. He had not, however, reckoned with the military forces held in readiness by the consul Q. Marcius Rex, cousin of his lately deceased aunt. Therefore he decided to abandon the project and, instead of persevering in an attempt which he now considered was bound to fail, he took the road to Rome.

## *In the Service of Pompey and Crassus*

So here he was in Rome again. Let us not forget that this time he had come back fully determined to achieve something extraordinary, to distinguish himself by some brilliant action which would immediately raise him from the obscure mediocrity to which he felt destiny had condemned him until now.

To start with, he married. A year after the death of his wife he renewed the bonds of matrimony. It is, however, quite clear that in this case it was a purely political transaction from which all question of sentiment was excluded. He chose as his wife the daughter of Q. Pompeius Rufus and thus became a relation by marriage of the great Pompey, whose reputation was beginning to dominate the contemporary scene both from the political and military point of view.

Caesar began his 'brilliant action' by offering himself to the master of the day as a propaganda agent. We may be sure that this was not what he had been dreaming of on his journey home, but it was certainly the wisest course he could take after he had looked round and analysed the situation from all sides.

Pompey accepted his service with alacrity. Actively and powerfully upheld by the equestrian order and in plebian circles, he had not enough supporters in the Senate. Caesar, who would now be a member, could therefore be very useful to him; and so, indeed, he was.

It began during the debate on a law proposed by the tribune of the people, A. Gabinius. This man was not completely unknown to Caesar since his wife figured at this time among his mistresses.<sup>54</sup> The law was intended to give Pompey supreme command over all naval forces in the impending war against the pirates, whose audacity knew no bounds. At the same time Pompey was to be authorized to choose from the Senate fifteen assistants, and to mobilize all the soldiers, sailors, and oarsmen he would need to man a fleet of two hundred vessels, while all the sums requisitioned by the quaestors were to be placed at his disposal.<sup>55</sup>

When this projected law was read before the people's assembly it was ratified 'with the greatest enthusiasm', Plutarch tells us, but the senators were perplexed and alarmed. They saw in this demonstration in favour of Pompey the first sign of a future military dictatorship, all the more dangerous because it appeared to be backed by the sympathy of the masses. To accept it would have been to prepare the way for their own ruin. To oppose it would give the people the impression that they were obstructing the restoration of the normal food supplies, which were blocked by the pirates' attacks on the roads connecting the metropolis with the corn-producing regions. The majority of the Senate were against the vote of the *comitia*. 'The most powerful among the senators', writes Plutarch, 'judged that such absolute and unlimited power was something to fear.' They went to the people's assembly to notify their opposition. They all rose 'with force' against Pompey, Plutarch says. Only Caesar, who accompanied them, dissented and spoke in his favour. His intervention was of no avail, however. The hostile comments made by the *patres* ended by cooling the ardour of the *comitia*. They separated without settling anything, but arranged to meet again the next day. In the interval the promoters of the law used every means of persuasion at their disposal and when it came up for discussion the second time, Pompey was granted nearly double what the first draft had proposed.

Caesar again intervened in favour of Pompey on January 1, 66, when the tribune Manilius, 'a mercenary individual and a vile instrument in the hands of others',<sup>56</sup> proposed to entrust the conduct of the war against Tigranes and Mithridates to Pompey, conqueror of the pirates. Dion Cassius is the only one among the ancient historians to note Caesar's intervention when the *lex Manilia de imperio Cn. Pompei* was put to the vote. He explains it in this way :

Caesar wanted both to flatter the people, who seemed to him far more powerful than the Senate, and to prepare the way for a similar decree in his own favour, at some future date. He sought at the same time to arouse still more jealousy and hatred against Pompey, thanks to the honours which would be conferred upon him, so that the people should the more quickly turn against him.<sup>57</sup>

It is interesting to compare these lines with the comments of Plutarch concerning Caesar's rôle in the discussion of the *lex Gabinia* : 'He supported it less for Pompey's sake than to insinuate himself as soon

## IN THE SERVICE OF POMPEY AND CRASSUS

as possible into the good graces of the people and to obtain their favour for himself.'

Let us return to the text of Dion Cassius. It suggests that in supporting the *lex Manilia* Caesar was merely acting upon the most elementary of calculations: the passage of the law being a foregone conclusion, no contrary opinion had any chance of success. In these circumstances it was better to gain Pompey's favour than to offend him. Above all it was important, under cover of embracing the cause of the favourite of the hour, to prolong his absence from the capital as much as possible, in order to divert the favour of the masses into different channels. Thus Caesar hoped to be able to serve his own ends very effectively. Again, however, he was obliged to start by serving the interests of somebody else who also wanted to profit by Pompey's absence to rise to the summit of power.

This 'somebody else' was called M. Licinius Crassus. Formerly, when he was in Rome after Sulla's death, Caesar seems to have had some quarrel with him. At any rate, while a prisoner of the pirates he was heard to remark bitterly that 'Crassus must be happy enough to know he was far away from Rome'.<sup>58</sup> Several years had passed since, and all these things were conveniently forgotten. A veil was thrown over the past and Caesar fixed his attention resolutely on the future which offered him at the outset the rôle of intimate adviser to 'the richest of all Romans'.

He started by becoming the lover of Crassus' wife. The conquest was not of a very high order and the prize anything but tempting. Tertulla was of an age which may be described as overripe. Widow of Crassus' elder brother, her fidelity to her second husband was not outstanding. We find in Cicero and Plutarch the clearest allusions to her lovers. There is every reason to think that Caesar, too, knew all about them. This did not prevent him, however, from tasting of the charms of this amiable fifty-year-old.<sup>59</sup> The result was an ardent friendship which Crassus showed at this time towards his happy supplanter. Henceforth he swore by Caesar alone. In all his projects we find traces and reflections of Caesar's mind. For projects Crassus had: specially since, on the expiration of his unfortunate consulship in 70, he had found himself condemned to inactivity—he who firmly believed that with his millions he should be allowed to indulge in every ambition.

Accordingly, not content with his election in 66 to the censorship, supreme honour in the hierarchy of Roman magistrates, he supplied

the funds for the electoral campaign of Caesar who had presented himself as a candidate for the office of aedile. He also financed the elections of his two other supporters, P. Cornelius Sulla and P. Autronius Paetus, who were seeking the consulship. In this way, from January 1, 65, the 'control levers' of the governmental machine were for all practical purposes to pass entirely into the hands of Crassus. Seconded by his friend and counsellor, Caesar, and directing the activities of his henchmen, the two consuls, as he pleased, Crassus would have been in a fair way to exercise unlimited power in every department of public and private administration.

The Senate was not long in realizing the danger into which it was running, and decided to nip this attempt in the bud. An action for illegal canvassing was brought by two of its members, L. Aurelius Cotta and L. Manlius Torquatus, against the two consuls-designate. Their election was annulled, and in November, 66, their own accusers were elected in their place. Crassus felt that this was aimed directly at himself. He determined to answer violence by violence. On the day of their entry into office Torquatus and Cotta were to be assassinated, and the deposed consuls reinstated there and then. At the same time Crassus was to be proclaimed dictator and Caesar his *magister equitum*, which would secure the control of the army for him. Those senators who offered any resistance were to be massacred without pity. This salutary example was calculated to discourage any further opposition and thus Rome would have to accept the accomplished fact.<sup>60</sup>

Crassus had no difficulty in finding trusty accomplices for the execution of his plan. He quickly formed a small but energetic team, consisting of men whose notions of morality adapted themselves admirably to the task which was to be allotted to them. The group contained besides Cornelius Sulla and Autronius Paetus, who were directly interested in the undertaking, a disturbing and formidable character who had not yet shown his full strength: L. Sergius Catiline. And there was also an old acquaintance of Caesar, C. Antonius Hybrida, whose conviction he had once vainly tried to bring about and whose close collaboration he now accepted with a light heart. This group of four men seems to have been specially chosen to carry out the massacre in the Senate and they were to be supported by 'covering troops', in other words, gangs of murderers recruited by Catiline and massed at the entrance of the *curia*.

A young impoverished patrician, Cn. Calpurnius Piso, was designated to provoke a revolt among the cities north of the River

Po—a work already begun by Caesar during his recent journey through their territory—and a bankrupt merchant, P. Sittius, was commissioned to secure the help of the kings of Mauretania, from whom reinforcements of troops and provisions were expected. The exact rôle played by Caesar in the preparation of the plot is not known. From the fact that he was to give the signal for the murder we may conclude that it was his task to organize it and that the men who were to carry it out were placed under his direction. The secret was badly kept. When, on January 1, 65, Torquatus and Cotta arrived to take up their official functions, a strongly armed guard surrounded them and Caesar, instantly realizing the change in the situation, there and then gave up all thought of the proposed murder. Catiline and his men who, their eyes fixed on Caesar, were waiting for the moment when he would drop the toga from his shoulder (the signal agreed upon between them) were obliged to withdraw with their hands and daggers unstained.

It was decided to put the affair off to another day. Circumstances became less and less favourable, however. The death of Calpurnius Piso, who towards the middle of January fell victim to an ambush in Spain, interrupted the negotiations with the cities north of the Po. That had an unfortunate result : the 'African delegate' dropped out. Crassus was completely discouraged and on the day of the second attempt, scheduled for the session of February 5, he did not appear in the Senate at all. It had been agreed that the signal for action would not be given till the moment when Crassus was seen entering the assembly. As Caesar did not see him he abstained once more from calling upon the murders. So ended this abortive plot wrongly known subsequently as 'the first Catilinarian conspiracy', in which after all, Catiline himself had been no more than a passive instrument, without any initiative whatever.

For the time being matters were left in abeyance. As the affair never materialized it had no consequences and no one got into trouble about it. Indeed, outside a strictly limited political circle, no one heard anything of it at first. It was not until later that knowledge of it became public, thanks to a certain L. Calpurnius Bibulus, a strange and ill-starred individual, with whom the reader is now going to become better acquainted.

*The Aedile*

OFFICIALLY, since January 1, 65, Caesar was supposed to discharge the duties of a curule aedile.<sup>61</sup> He, his colleague Bibulus, whose former career remains for us a complete mystery, and the two elected plebeian aediles who entered upon their duties at the same time as he did, formed the college of aediles who were responsible for practically all the municipal administration of Rome. Their tasks were numerous. In a general way the whole policing of the capital was their responsibility: the supervision of all public gatherings, baths, taverns, brothels, etc.; the pursuit and arrest of evil-doers; the protection of peaceable citizens. Under their charge were the upkeep of roads, the cleaning of streets and squares, the care of fountains and aqueducts; furthermore, they exercised a kind of price control to prevent a rise in the cost of foodstuffs or their monopolization. For this reason they had the right to impose severe fines on speculators and to punish all infringements of the laws controlling usury.

Theirs was the task of superintending the maintenance of temples and public buildings and it frequently happened that they used the proceeds of the fines for embellishments or new constructions. But the thing which gave most glamour and political importance to the office of the aediles was their special privilege of organizing public games and festivals. In principle, the expenses were met by the State treasury, but the sums allocated were seldom adequate. The aediles made up the deficit by delving into their coffers of fine-money or, after the year 213, into their own purses. So it came about that in the last century of the Republic the post of aedile might be said to be the monopoly of the rich. It necessitated the laying out of considerable sums which could only be redeemed after a long interval, for the aedile would have to wait until, upon the expiration of his term of office, he could obtain a praetorship with the prospect of becoming governor of some province before he could hope to make a fortune bigger than the one he had sacrificed. It was above all this spectacular side of his new position which must have attracted Caesar.

At any rate, Plutarch and Suetonius, the two principal sources of his biography, insist especially, if not exclusively, on this aspect of his activity as aedile.

To start off with, Caesar had to organize the great festival commemorating the arrival of Cybela in Rome. It fell on the fourth of April and he showed on this occasion that he was fully determined to dazzle his fellow citizens by the splendour and abundance of the festivities listed in the programme. The fatal question was not long in coming up: where was the money to be found to meet the expenses which from the very moment when preparations started promised to be immense? Personally he possessed nothing but debts, and the only course open to him was to add to them. Now, given the extent of his liabilities, this no longer seemed an easy matter. Happily the fortune of his colleague Bibulus was of a more positive character. Caesar knew how to convince him that if he put it at the disposal of the State he would be fulfilling a patriotic duty while making an investment which would be highly profitable in the future.

Bibulus obediently opened his purse and let Caesar draw from it as he pleased. The latter managed to gain all the credit for the splendour of the festival. As for his 'sleeping partner', no one except a few intimates gave him a thought. Everyone was speaking of Caesar, it was his taste and his munificence alone that won universal admiration.

After this first success, Caesar embarked in full confidence upon the great test: the organization of the 'Roman Games', which took place in September and which were the principal attraction of the year.<sup>62</sup> This time Caesar surpassed himself. Not only did he make the fullest possible use of his colleague's funds, but, although crippled with debts, he somehow managed on this occasion to contract fresh ones. Sallust describes them as 'enormous', and everything goes to show that he is not exaggerating. Caesar wanted to give an exceptional brilliance to this performance and, on the pretext of honouring the memory of his father, he added an extra and particularly costly item: a fight of gladiators, which surpassed anything which had ever been seen before in this field.

This form of posthumous homage rendered by children to their parents was a very ancient custom in Rome. Perhaps the fact that he had waited nearly twenty years before offering it to his father's shade proves that Caesar's motive was rather meant to give an honourable justification for his wild prodigality. To get some idea of it we need only remember that Livy thought worthy of comment



the fight of gladiators offered on the same pretext by the sons of M. Valerius Laevinus—and these comprised only twenty-five pairs of fighters. Now it was three hundred and twenty pairs that Caesar brought to fight in front of the populace; moreover, he equipped them with solid silver weapons, which was an unprecedented extravagance. He had engaged even more, but Suetonius affirms that 'the importance of the troop which he had gathered together alarmed his enemies, and, as a precautionary measure, it was decided to limit the maximum number of gladiators a Roman citizen was allowed to maintain'.

Apart from these sporting and artistic displays, Caesar the aedile distinguished himself by the care with which he embellished public squares and buildings. He had the Forum, the Comitium and the temples decorated. He organized a sort of permanent gallery at the Capitol, putting in porticos where some of his magnificent art collections were shown. But what probably impressed his fellow citizens most was the restoration which he carried out, at his own expense, of the Appian way, the *regina viarum*, the most ancient and famous of Roman roads.<sup>63</sup>

The construction and upkeep of the roads in Italy was generally entrusted to the censors, and consequently belonged to the domain of Crassus, who was censor at that time. He used his right of delegating authority, however, in favour of Caesar who thus became *curator viae Appiae* while continuing to hold the office of aedile. We do not know what this additional undertaking cost Caesar. Plutarch speaks of a 'large fortune' which he sacrificed on this occasion, but he does not fail to note the great advantages which Caesar was able to draw from all this prodigious expenditure:

The sumptuousness of the games, festivals, and banquets which he gave and which outshone in brilliance everything that had been done before, filled the people with such devotion that there was no one who did not try to find for him new offices and new honours to repay him for his magnificence.

*First Encounters with Cicero*

## THE EGYPTIAN AFFAIR

**T**HUS everything was set in his favour. All that remained to be done was to pass on to action, and to exploit the sympathy and good will of the masses for his own advantage. At that very moment an excellent opportunity presented itself.

It concerned a certain 'Egyptian affair', which had been much discussed in Rome during the second half of the year 65. King Ptolemy XIII Auletus, assassin and usurper of the throne of his predecessor, the young Ptolemy XII Alexander II, had just been driven out of Alexandria by his own subjects. Now the rumour had spread in Rome that the unfortunate Alexander II, placed on the throne by Sulla in the year 80 and put to death after reigning in all exactly nineteen days, had bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman State. The moment had therefore come—in the absence of any sovereign at the head of the kingdom—to lay hands on it in conformity with the clauses of the will. It was a choice morsel. The country abounded in natural resources and the royal treasury was well supplied. Besides this, Egypt offered incalculable commercial and strategic advantages on account of her key position on the borders of the eastern Mediterranean. The leaders of the democratic party in Rome—that is to say, Crassus and Caesar, and particularly the latter—had immediately realized the importance of seizing it for their own purposes before the attention of Pompey, who was engaged in operations at the head of his troops in the Near East, was attracted by this tempting prize. By taking the initiative of incorporating Egypt as a province within the framework of the Roman Republic, they would acquire a sort of priority over this territory which might serve them as a base in the future and enable them to counterbalance the conquests which Pompey was making in Asia.

They started by working most effectively upon public opinion. Suddenly, fifteen years after the event, people realized that it was unworthy of Romans to forget the unhappy victim of this crime, and that it was incumbent on them to declare war upon the usurper as

they had previously done upon Jugurtha in similar circumstances. They judged, moreover, that it was a sacred duty to execute the clauses of a will, especially when such haste had been shown after the death of the young king to carry out his wishes with regard to his private wealth and to move it immediately from the vaults of his bankers in Tyre to Rome. Of course precedents were evoked : Attalus III of Pergamos in 133, Ptolemy Apion of Cyrene in 96, and the recent case of Nicomedes of Bithynia in 74.

Caesar, who had had occasion to watch very closely the carrying out of this last operation, judged that he was ideally qualified to undertake a similar one on Egyptian soil. He reached an understanding with some of the tribunes of the people, urging them to introduce the draft of a law granting him troops and extraordinary powers for the purpose of establishing Egypt as a Roman province. Crassus, who appeared not to understand the full extent of Caesar's ambitions, undertook to support the draft in the Senate.

The game offered Caesar double stakes : if he succeeded he would find himself at the head of an army and master of a rich and fertile country. In that case he would parley with Pompey not as a subordinate but as an equal. In fact, when all was said and done, it would be for him to dictate his terms to the conqueror of the East.

The Senate had for some time been rather nervously watching the unusual manifestations of this extraordinary aedile's restless activity. It had been specially on the alert since the recent rumours concerning a mysterious plot which had come to nothing, and it resolved to oppose Caesar's plan. The senators preferred to give up the idea of acquiring this territory, important as it was, rather than arm with their own hands an ambitious young man whose desire for domination was becoming more and more apparent. Crassus tried to back up the project by evoking the precedent of Jugurtha and the 'sequestration' of Tyre which called for a sequel. The *patres* would not allow themselves to be convinced. A 'new man', acting as spokesman of the patricians, delivered a biting and convincing speech in which he demolished Crassus' arguments and reduced Caesar's hopes to nothing. The proposition collapsed under an adverse vote. The man who had brought about this result was called Cicero. He was six years older than Caesar and had finished his term as praetor the very day when the latter took over his duties as aedile.

Caesar wanted to revenge himself for this discomfiture. He did so, and in a very striking manner. With great secrecy he ordered

some new effigies of Marius and, under cover of night, had them placed in the Capitol with the trophies commemorating his uncle's victories, in exactly the same place they had occupied in former days, before their 'proscription' by Sulla. The effect which this produced among the people can best be described by the following passage, which is one of the most expressive in Plutarch :

When the people beheld these images, shining with gold and executed with the finest craftsmanship, and when they saw from the inscriptions that they commemorated the victories of Marius over the Cimbrians, they were filled with fear at the audacity of him who had placed them there—for there could be no mistaking who it was. The reports which immediately spread attracted everyone to the spectacle. Some said openly that Caesar aimed at becoming a tyrant . . . that it was a test he was making to gauge the temper of the populace already allured by his magnificence ; and that he wanted to see whether they were sufficiently tamed by the public festivities he had given them with so much ostentation, that they would allow him to indulge in such games and to embark on such challenging innovations. The partisans of Marius, emboldened by his audacity, assembled in great numbers and filled the Capitol with the sound of their applause. Some among them . . . even shed tears of joy ; they praised Caesar to the skies and said that he alone was worthy to be of the line of Marius.

This account needs no commentary. It only remains to decide if it really was an act of unprecedented audacity on Caesar's part, intended as an open declaration of war against the party of Sulla's former supporters. If we go entirely by Plutarch we are naturally inclined to take this view. If, on the other hand, we consider his report in conjunction with the facts, taking into consideration precedents and analogies, we find that the 'revolutionary' character of this action is somewhat toned down. The action itself, apart from the personality involved, was well within the limits of Caesar's duties as aedile. Many of his predecessors had decorated the Capitol and other public places of the city with a variety of objects and statues, using for this purpose the proceeds of the fines they had imposed on law-breakers. It was therefore solely the fact of having evoked the memory of his uncle which in this case might afford grounds for an accusation. More than six years before, Caesar, still practically unknown, had

paraded the effigy of the same man through the streets of Rome and to the Capitol, without being interfered with in any way. After having tolerated such a performance on the part of a simple quaestor-elect, could anyone find fault with it when it came from a curule aedile, a personage of senatorial rank who had just distinguished himself so brilliantly in organizing the festivals of the Republic?

Such may have been the arguments Caesar used when he appeared before the Senate, which had assembled immediately on hearing of this event. The old *princeps senatus* Catulus, whose father had been put to death by Marius, was heard to speak 'with force' against Caesar, who 'was not attacking the Republic by hidden mines, but was openly erecting his batteries against it'. Caesar spoke next. His speech has not come down to us. All we know is that he carried the day and was able to clear himself of all the accusations brought against him by 'the most esteemed of Romans'. As a result, 'his admirers conceived the highest hopes for him', says Plutarch who, unlike Suetonius, spreads himself with evident pleasure over this incident. 'They encouraged him', he continues, 'not to give in to anyone, assuring him that, upheld by the people's favour, he would triumph over all his rivals and would one day hold the highest rank in Rome.'

## THE CONSULAR ELECTIONS

A few days after the defeat of the Egyptian project, Caesar learnt that the man who was responsible for it was seeking election as consul. He at once set about thwarting the plans of this pernicious competitor.<sup>64</sup> Crassus professed to harbour the same sentiments with regard to Cicero. Besides, he considered it intolerable that a politician who wished to make his way in Rome should escape from his financial 'control' and should persist in not figuring among his debtors. He accordingly declared himself to be in complete agreement with Caesar and assured him of his wholehearted support. They began by putting up rival candidates to block the way of this undesirable aspirant. Two of Crassus' most devoted agents, Catiline and C. Antonius, agreed to stand for election.<sup>65</sup> The first had already become popular in plebeian circles. The second still enjoyed the prestige attached to the memory of his father, the great orator. Crassus' money was to do the rest.

In spite of everything, Cicero was unanimously elected. It is true, though, that C. Antonius succeeded in gaining enough votes to be

proclaimed second consul. Catiline was not far behind and still had hopes of succeeding at next year's elections, when he would not have to compete with so formidable a rival as Cicero.

The latter must have viewed this prospect with great uneasiness. It gave him grounds for anticipating that everything which he might accomplish in the course of his consulship would be ruthlessly wiped out by the man chosen to succeed him. Hence he resolved to take preventive measures and he set out to exclude Catiline thoroughly and for all time from public life. To obtain this result he employed a stratagem which at first sight seemed clever enough.

At the expiration of his term of office as aedile, Caesar had been chosen by the praetor as *judex quaestionis*<sup>66</sup> in charge of the trial of the Sullan 'proscriptors': the ex-centurion L. Luscius who had to answer for three murders, and L. Bellienus who at a signal from Sulla had stabbed Lucretius Ofella. He showed himself to be an inexorable judge of the utmost severity: both the accused were sentenced to death. Cicero considered that it was now the turn of Catiline, who had been responsible for particularly cruel executions during the Sullan proscriptions, to give an account of his actions. He therefore summoned him through one of his friends, L. Lucceius, to appear for trial. It was not difficult to follow his calculations: Caesar, called upon to judge the case after the double precedent of capital punishment inflicted in spite of certain attenuating circumstances in favour of the accused, could not avoid taking an equally stern line with a man who, far from offering any justification, did not hesitate to boast publicly about his assassinations. So, with his own hand, Caesar would have to strike down his accomplice, thus ridding Cicero of a hated enemy.

On the day of the trial Catiline, proud and disdainful, openly admitted all the crimes with which he was charged. It only remained for Caesar to pronounce the verdict. It was an acquittal, pure and simple. . . .

The public was astounded at the judgment. Cicero uttered loud cries; but Caesar remained indifferent. He needed Catiline. He saw in him an ideal instrument for his future vengeance, and he spared him.<sup>67</sup>

## THE PROJECT OF SERVILIUS RULLUS

The year was drawing to a close. A few weeks more, and Cicero was going to assume office. The new tribunes of the people, those invaluable assistants of Caesar, took over their duties twenty-one days

before the curule magistrates, that is to say, on December 10, 64. Immediately, one of them, P. Servilius Rullus, announced his intention of submitting a draft for a new agrarian law.<sup>68</sup> On learning of this, Cicero showed the greatest eagerness to know what it proposed. He made it known that he was quite prepared to introduce this law himself and to support it 'if it seemed to him useful to the Roman people'. He did not rest there: without waiting for the slightest invitation from the tribunes, he came to one of their meetings. His reception was such that nothing was left for him but to withdraw.

'I then ceased to offer my services', he says in one of his speeches, 'for fear that my assiduity should seem insidious or unworthy of my character.' And he adds: 'However, they continued to have meetings and to admit certain individuals to their councils.' The name of Caesar is not mentioned, but this is evidently directed at him. It is agreed that he probably was, if not the author, at least the hidden sponsor of this law. There is, in fact, such a close connection between his ambitions at the time and the principal clauses of this project that it becomes impossible to speak of a mere coincidence.

The text which was posted up in the Forum contained forty articles in all. One of them called for the nomination of ten special magistrates, entrusted with carrying the law into effect and elected by the people on condition that they were present in Rome at the time of election. Thus Pompey, who was absent, would be automatically eliminated. These new decemvirs would be charged with transferring the lands which formed part of the proposed allotments. The fundamental principle of the law was: to sell the estates outside Italy and with the money thus raised to acquire territory inside the country in order to encourage the flow of the urban population to rural districts, where it would be transformed into a mass of small landowners. The law was framed in such a manner that Egypt could be included in the zone of territory to be disposed of. In this way a plan long cherished by Caesar would indirectly be made possible. His nomination as one of the commissioners was all that would be needed—and that was something which would present no difficulties in view of the position he now occupied.

Cicero immediately saw through this subtle game and did not hesitate to denounce it publicly in one of the speeches he made to oppose the law which he considered subversive and dangerous.

'Are you going to give up Alexandria at the secret instigation of those whose public demands you have rejected?' he exclaimed. 'Do

these ideas issue from the reflections of sober men or the delirium of drunkards? Are they the judgments of the sane or the delusions of madmen?

Nevertheless, it took four speeches, each one more vehement than the last, to defeat this project. It also took the *intercessio* of a tribune called Caecilius, 'a citizen as modest as he was distinguished' (according to Cicero), who betrayed his colleague by passing over to the enemy camp at the last moment. Although dearly bought, this was an unquestionable success for Cicero and helped to establish more firmly than ever his authority as supreme magistrate of the Republic. It remained for Caesar to reply.



## *Pontifex Maximus*

THE *pontifex maximus* Metellus Pius, who had fallen ill in the latter half of 64, died at the beginning of the following year. Caesar immediately presented himself as a candidate for the vacant office. What a sensation ! This appointment was regarded as essentially reserved for illustrious old men, to whose long and glorious career on battlefields or in the Senate it provided a fitting crown. Now Caesar at this period was scarcely thirty-eight years old. His personality and influence counted only in plebeian circles. His political experience was limited to one year as aedile and to a foreign quaestorship prematurely interrupted. Military achievements entitling him to consideration were practically non-existent. In the eyes of the *patres* he was throwing down a challenge to his fellow citizens by seeking this high distinction—a challenge which had all the appearance of a deliberate impertinence since his two senior colleagues at the College of Pontiffs, the ‘venerable Catulus’ and his former chief, the ‘glorious Servilius Isauricus’, had also presented themselves as candidates.

As it happened Caesar was carrying out a plan carefully prepared in advance. Sulla had repealed the *lex Domitia* (104), which entitled the people to appoint the *pontifex maximus*, and had restored the power of election to the College of Pontiffs. Caesar had every reason to fear that this vote in a small committee would destroy his chances. Therefore his first object was to obtain the restoration of the *lex Domitia* which would enable him to use those methods of persuasion and corruption that he understood so well. Again he had recourse to his favourite procedure : the intervention of the tribunes.

Among their number in the year 63 figured a certain T. Labienus who together with Caesar had served in Cilicia under the command of P. Servilius Isauricus. It was thanks to his proposal that the law was brought before the *comitia* and the power of electing the Supreme Pontiff was restored to the people. After that, Caesar’s chances were considerably increased and his election began to be regarded as quite within the realm of possibility. The Senate woke up to this, but a

little too late. Catulus, that 'great and honest man', could think of nothing better than to offer Caesar a fairly large sum if he would give up his candidacy. Caesar replied that 'he would borrow still larger sums in order to pursue it'.

This was a serious blunder on the part of Catulus, because by letting Caesar know the amount he was prepared to pay for his withdrawal he revealed how far the largess of the rival competitors could go. Caesar cannot have failed to profit by this information and to increase his own gifts in proportion in order to buy those who were prepared to sell themselves to Catulus.

It is obvious that to meet the cost of such transactions Caesar needed virtually inexhaustible funds. Nothing short of continuous borrowing could maintain the flow. He resigned himself to this quickly and with a good grace. The number of his creditors grew steadily and, as he never discussed the conditions of his loans, he finally found himself so heavily involved that, should he fail to be elected, he would have no other choice but prison or exile.

It was to this depressing alternative that he alluded when, as he was leaving home to go to the Campus Martius on the morning of the elections, he said to his mother, 'To-day you will either see your son made *pontifex maximus*, or banished'.

Suetonius affirms that Caesar was so far ahead of the other two competitors that 'he alone gained more votes in their own tribes than both of them together in all the tribes'. Plutarch tells us, however, that 'when the votes were collected the contest was very keen'. We can well understand that the supporters of Catulus and Isauricus on learning the result were driven to express their disappointment loudly and in appropriate terms, 'but finally Caesar carried the day', concludes this author. And, after all, that was the only thing that mattered.

The importance to Caesar of this election was immense. Now, no ambition would be excessive, no aim too high.

Before the founding of the Republic the kings themselves had exercised the function of *pontifex maximus*. After their expulsion the priestly body chose a head or president who was appointed for life and whose administrative and disciplinary authority became absolute and unlimited. A special residence<sup>69</sup> was assigned to him in the immediate vicinity of the Regia,<sup>70</sup> where the sacred objects confided to his care were kept and where he called together the sacerdotal colleges over whose meetings he presided. The *pontifex maximus*

was obliged to live there. Caesar did not hesitate to avail himself of this opportunity to leave his old house in a quarter of the city which was becoming less and less reputable,<sup>71</sup> and to establish himself in the vast and sumptuous dwelling reserved for the spiritual head of all Romans.

## The Trial of Rabirius

**S**HORTLY after Caesar had acquired his high sacerdotal dignity it was learnt in Rome, not without surprise, that the tribune T. Labienus—the same man who had so obligingly co-operated in facilitating the election of the new *pontifex maximus*—had declared his intention of bringing an accusation against the elderly C. Rabirius for having taken part in the murder of the tribune Saturninus thirty-seven years before.<sup>80</sup> At first people were lost in conjectures, and wondered what such a belated thirst for vengeance could portend. . . . Then they understood.

There was someone behind Labienus who was directing the action, and this someone was Caesar. As for the action itself, its true significance went far beyond the object involved. It aimed higher and farther. To justify their act, the murderers of Saturninus had invoked the Senate's decree *ultimum* which, made at a moment when the State was in grave danger, authorized extraordinary measures on the pretext of public safety. To punish them would have been tantamount to a formal condemnation of this decree which would thus have lost its legality. So a precedent would have been created and this, should occasion arise, could be used to deprive the Senate of this important prerogative which formed one of the basic foundations of its power. This was in fact Caesar's plan : by partial attacks, skilfully directed, to undermine the authority of the Senate until the time came when the whole institution, lacking its mainstays, would crumble of itself.

The promoters of the affair considered that it was exceptionally serious and should on this account be conducted according to the rigorous procedure of *per duellio*, reserved for crimes of high treason. This method had fallen into disuse and, never having been applied since the year 384, decreed an ignominious death as the only possible punishment for the accused. Dion Cassius tells us that the case was the occasion for 'seditious agitation and violent quarrels'. The Senate was divided. 'Some did not want it to be brought before a tribunal, while others demanded that a tribunal should be appointed to try it.'

It was this second group which had its way, ' thanks to the influence of Caesar and some other citizens ', declares the author.

The principle of *per duellio* once accepted, the two *duoviri perduellionis* had to be appointed to judge the case. Caesar arranged to get himself chosen and to be seconded by his cousin, the insignificant L. Caesar, consul of the previous year, who obediently accepted the part of a silent and obliging supernumerary which was allotted to him. For it was Caesar alone who conducted the case from beginning to end. Suetonius insists upon the ' tenacity ' and ' passion ' with which he sought the condemnation of Rabirius. J. Carcopino, who cannot bring himself to admit that Caesar could be cruel and merciless when his cause demanded it, supposes that it must have been mere play-acting on his part.<sup>81</sup> We have the impression that this view was not shared by the accused. He hastened to grasp the one plank of safety which the law held out to him : an appeal to the people. That is why we see the *comitia* assembling at the Campus Martius to give the final verdict. There is every indication that they intended to uphold Caesar's judgment, since the cross had been erected and the executioner was authorized to enter the boundary of the Campus so that he would be ready to proceed without delay to the eventual crucifixion of the condemned.

At that moment Cicero intervened. He was one of the first to guess the real object of Caesar's efforts in this affair. With remarkable decision and firmness he quite simply used his consular authority to forbid the meeting of the *comitia*. Thus the revision of the judgment which condemned Rabirius could not take place, but at the same time the judgment could no longer be carried out, and the accused escaped death.

To risk such an act of authority one had to be very sure of one's power. Cicero dared to do it because he was certain that the entire Senate would support him. Caesar must have reasoned in the same way, and he accepted without protest the nullification of his verdict.

He tried all the same to make a hidden counter-attack. Once more it was Labienus who undertook to carry it out. In his capacity as tribune of the people, he again summoned Rabirius to justice, making use of his right to demand a trial *in multum* of individuals known to be guilty of having endangered the security of the State. This time there was no risk of capital punishment for Rabirius but only of a fine or, at the worst, exile. But the mere fact of his condemnation

could have been construed as censuring the cool irresponsibility with which the previous judgment had been set aside.

Again Cicero came forward in person to parry the stroke. Leaving his consul's seat, he took up his position as an ordinary barrister beside the celebrated Hortensius who had undertaken the defence of the accused. His appearance aroused keen displeasure in the audience. The crowd, among whom Caesar's supporters were numerous, could not forgive Cicero for his recent high-handed action. They received him with hostile shouts and tried to prevent him from speaking. The tumult was so great that extraordinary measures had to be employed in order to bring the session to a close and suspend deliberations. The praetor Metellus Celer could think of no better way of restoring order than to rush to the Janiculum and take down the flag which, in accordance with the law, was flying over the building.<sup>82</sup> As no public deliberations could be carried on without it, the meeting was automatically closed and the debate terminated. Thus ended the case of Rabirius, this time for ever. The old man was allowed to finish his days in peace.

## *On the Fringe of a Conspiracy*

WHY did Caesar abandon the Rabirius affair? Probably his reason was the same as when he gave up the project of annexing Egypt. Once more he had gauged his opponent's strength and judged that it would be better to carry his attack into another field.

This new field was opened up for him by a man whom he had learnt to know well and to whom he was attached by bonds of which it is unfortunately impossible for us to determine the exact nature: Catiline.

Since his defeat at the consular elections, this man had constantly been giving proof of a feverish activity. Tirelessly and with grim perseverance he was enlarging his realm of action and increasing the number of his supporters. He was no longer a mere tool of Crassus and Caesar. In many respects Catiline's latest enterprise bore his personal stamp, but unquestionably his two protectors were perfectly well informed about his objectives. It can of course be admitted that at the last moment, when the sum of the social demands made by the Catilinarians had reached its height and it was apparent that a war of extermination against the rich was virtually inevitable, Crassus may have shown some reticence and refrained from clapping with both hands for a movement which preached first and foremost the seizure of his own fortune. But there was no need for Caesar to be embarrassed by such preoccupations, since *his* fortune was still to be counted in ever increasing debts, and it can well be believed that if the day of Catiline's social programme, with its total abolition of all such liabilities, had ever dawned, Caesar would not have been the one to show uncompromising hostility.

At the time when this conspiracy was about to come to a head Caesar, elected praetor for the following year, had scarcely three months to wait before entering upon his duties. Certain historians have wondered whether it was really in his interest to favour an attempt at social revolution at the very moment when he was to be called to a high public magistracy, with its immediate prospect of the

governorship of a province, so ardently coveted by every politician in Rome. In answer to this it can be said that, if it was not entirely in Caesar's interest to encourage the movement, it might have seemed useful to him to tolerate it and to profit by it should occasion offer, by coming forward once the blow had been struck in the guise of a mediator preaching moderation.<sup>83</sup> In any case, there is reason to believe that at the last moment a serious conflict arose between Catiline and Caesar. This is the only possible explanation of the steps taken by the latter to inform Cicero of the plot which was being prepared. Caesar did not tell him anything he did not know already; a team of well-trained professional spies had kept the consul up to date with all the activities of the conspirators. But this does not diminish the significance of Caesar's gesture. All pretexts and excuses imaginable are useless. On this occasion the greatest of the Romans behaved as the vilest of informers.

Thereafter, for the whole month of November, Caesar's conduct was a model of prudent discretion. He ostensibly avoided compromising himself, and his unbroken silence during the famous session of the 8th, when Catiline fell beneath the weight of Cicero's eloquence, was revealing enough in itself.<sup>84</sup>

He was obliged to abandon this passive attitude at the session of December 5, when the other conspirators' fate was under discussion.<sup>85</sup>

We have several accounts of this session and of Caesar's intervention in the debate which enable us to reconstruct its sudden turns and developments fairly accurately. Modern descriptions of this memorable scene are not lacking, but in all of them the reports of the deliberations leave us with a sense of utter confusion which we are anxious to avoid here.

The session opened with a summary of the situation given by Cicero in his capacity as consul. Next, he invited the Senate to present its views on the punishment to be meted out to the conspirators. The first called upon to speak, according to the established tradition, was the consul-elect for the following year, D. Junius Silanus. The text of his speech has not come down to us. Plutarch merely records his opinion: 'The conspirators should be led to the public prison to suffer the supreme penalty.' Sallust is no less laconic: 'Silanus had expressed the opinion that the prisoners should be condemned to the supreme penalty.' Cicero is the only one to dwell a little longer on this speech. He tells us that 'Silanus did not think that men convicted of plotting to exterminate the Roman people, to overthrow the



empire, to destroy Rome even to its very name, should for an instant enjoy the light or breathe the air of which they have sought to deprive their fellow citizens.' To support his argument Silanus recalled, still according to Cicero, that in Rome 'more than once offending citizens had been seen to receive the supreme penalty.' These three versions agree perfectly on one point: in categorical terms, excluding any possible ambiguity, Silanus asked that the Catilinarians should suffer the 'supreme penalty', that is to say, capital punishment. This must be kept in mind.

The men of consular rank, who were then questioned in order of seniority, were all of the same opinion. Several among them were not content to make a simple declaration but chose to deliver speeches of greater or lesser importance. According to Sallust, 'They deplored in magnificently turned phrases the misfortunes of the Republic; they enumerated the ravages of war, the evils endured by the vanquished, the virgins and children carried off, the sons torn from their fathers' arms, the mothers exposed to the brutalities of the conqueror, the temples and houses pillaged; they described the city given up to carnage and in flames, with weapons, corpses, blood, and tears everywhere'.

Such speeches ended by raising the feelings of the assembly to a very high pitch. They had already been considerably worked up, thanks to the clever way the scene had been set by Cicero, who with infinite skill had been able to exploit the unrest and anxiety of the preceding days.

It was in such an atmosphere of extreme nervous tension that Caesar had to speak when his turn came to express an opinion about the punishment to be inflicted upon the conspirators.

His position was extremely delicate. He could not remain silent, as he had done during the session of November 8. This time, as praetor-elect, he was called upon by name to be the first to speak among all the men of his own rank in the Senate. To oppose the opinion of Silanus, namely to defend the conspirators, would have confirmed the ugly rumours which were for ever being circulated in the Senate—covertly encouraged by the able propaganda of Cicero—concerning his supposed complicity with Catiline, and this could not have failed to have the most disastrous consequences for him. On the other hand, the people would never have forgiven him if his vote had helped to send to their death the men whom they already considered as martyrs to their cause.

It was a perilous situation: just as he was about to reach his objective

there was a chance that the whole career for which he had laboured so hard might be shattered in an instant. Caesar extricated himself by improvising a speech which is a masterpiece of both eloquence and diplomatic subtlety.

We have Sallust's version of it which seems to be quite a faithful record.

The beginning of the speech shows a certain embarrassment. We feel that the speaker was a little perplexed, trying to gain time, searching for arguments, feeling his way on ground of which he was as yet none too sure. His initial remarks were of a general character which might easily have puzzled his listeners who more than once in the course of this introduction must have wondered what he was aiming at. Then a veiled warning was discreetly introduced: 'Take heed, Roman Senators, lest your revulsion for the crime of Lentulus and his accomplices prevail over your dignity; take heed lest you follow the counsels of revenge rather than those of honour.' From this point the direction in which he was going was gradually made clear by arguments as ingenious as they were prudent. He referred to the tragic and lugubrious tone of the previous speakers whose phrases were all 'magnificently turned'. Was this necessary? 'Can he who has not been moved by so great, so atrocious a crime, be roused by a speech?' *So great, so atrocious a crime*—this is how he described the plot of the Catilinarians. Did this mean that he was prepared to condemn them? Not at all. In all matters, Caesar considered, one must avoid hasty judgments, especially when placed at the head of State affairs. 'If those who live in obscurity are led astray by their resentment we generally know nothing about it; their reputation and their fortunes are unchanged. But those who are invested with great powers . . . have all mankind as witnesses of their actions. Thus the higher we are raised the less we are free and the more we must shrink from partiality, hatred, and above all from the haste of passion.' Hardly had he developed this argument when he hastened once more to reassure his hearers about his attitude towards the conspirators by proclaiming that 'all possible tortures could never equal their offence'. But—'Most men only remember their last impressions,' he delicately insinuated. 'They forget the crime to dwell on the punishment.'

Thus, in veiled terms, Caesar brought a heavy threat to bear upon the venerable assembly: the fury of the populace would not forgive those who wished to make themselves responsible for the death of the

conspirators. Caesar only made a passing reference to this, however : the flow of his speech was hardly interrupted by it, but it was just enough to sow the seeds of uneasiness among some of his colleagues. By now his preliminaries were over and he addressed himself directly to the first speaker, D. Junius Silanus, that ' worthy and noble citizen ' (whose wife Servilia had been his favourite mistress for many a year). ' A man such as he,' proclaimed Caesar, ' would be incapable of listening to his personal feelings of hatred or affection in such a grave matter.' Nevertheless, he did not agree with him about the punishment to be inflicted. Not that it seemed too cruel—' Can one be cruel to such men ? ' he was careful to add—but he simply thought it to be ' contrary to the principles by which we govern '. Silanus demanded the death penalty. Was it really a penalty to cease living ? Was that the retribution which such an atrocious crime deserved ? Caesar thought not, and he said so in a sentence which, even taking into account the part which Sallust may have had in framing it, is full of a sombre majestic beauty. ' In sorrow and misfortune, death is only a state of quietude, and not a torment. It brings an end to all mortal ills ; beyond it there is neither joy nor sorrow.' These words, of which the rhythm of the Latin accentuates the superb solemnity, were strikingly contradicted by Caesar himself several times over in the course of his career. Did he think, while pronouncing them, of his merciless prosecution of Rabirius, of Luscius, of Bellienus, when he had demanded the death of the accused as the only penalty equal to their offence ? Was it to ' soften their fate ' that he had the Cilician pirates crucified while still a young beginner ? No, most certainly he had no thought of raking up those superfluous memories at the moment when, making the most of the impression created by this masterly oratorical stroke, he was about to complete the development of his subtle argument :

The laws of Rome forbade that condemned citizens should be put to death, and prescribed the penalty of exile. In view of the gravity of the crime Silanus wished for an exceptional punishment. Very well ! But in that case, why set a limit ? Would mere death suffice for the expiation of such monstrous offences as the accused were guilty of ? Did they not deserve some added punishment ? For instance, to be beaten with rods before being handed over to the executioner ? It was true that the *lex Porcia* forbade this where Roman citizens were concerned. But since it had been judged possible to set aside one law, it also should be permitted to ignore a second, and a third, and a

fourth—all the laws in fact! What would be the end of it all? Caesar wondered. Certainly there was nothing to fear as long as 'our illustrious consul' remained at his post. But 'it is possible that at another time, under another consul . . . an imaginary conspiracy might be taken for a real one. Then, when the consul, following our example and with the authority of a senatorial decree, has once unsheathed his sword, who will be able to stop or moderate his action?'

What then was to be done with the prisoners? There was no question of restoring their liberty, thus permitting them to go and swell Catiline's army. 'It is my opinion,' Caesar announced in conclusion, 'that their goods should be confiscated, that they should be kept in prison in our strongest cities, and that no one should ever be allowed to appeal either to the people or to the Senate for their liberation. . . .'

After Caesar had finished his speech a feeling of discomfort and uneasiness settled over the assembly. It was not that the senators, or at least a certain number of them, were genuinely moved by his arguments. They were simply afraid to shoulder a responsibility for which some triumphant imitator of Catiline might later on demand an account. For several moments there was a painful and embarrassed silence. Old Catulus, who could not forgive Caesar his recent defeat, was the first to break it by protesting with indignation against these tortuous arguments aimed at enabling the guilty to escape from their well-deserved punishment. He was allowed time to work off his bad temper, after which the deliberations started again and persons of praetorial rank were asked to give their views. It was then that Quintus Cicero, the consul's own brother, surprised everybody by taking up his position on Caesar's side. The confusion increased when another senator of praetorial rank, Tib. Claudius Nero, was heard to ask for the adjournment of the trial of the conspirators until the victory over Catiline was complete.

Judging that the assembly was in danger of adopting hasty and improvised resolutions which might nullify the results reached at the expense of so much effort, Cicero rose to speak with a view to clarifying the situation.

He began by throwing bouquets to Caesar, who 'throughout his political life has always followed the path in which the people love to see their friends'. 'In pronouncing a vote worthy of his exalted character and of his noble birth,' continued Cicero, 'Caesar has given us an eternal pledge of his attachment to his country.' But while

loading him with compliments and praise, he was seeking in a speech as brilliant as it was perfidious to wound Caesar with the same weapons he himself had used. He declared that 'the gentlest and most merciful of men' had succeeded in finding a far more cruel penalty for the conspirators than the one which he, Cicero, had proposed. Had he not recognized that death, far from being a punishment, was merely a natural law which the wise man 'never meets with regret' and that the worst of tortures was the eternal prison into which he would throw the condemned? Let the senators choose then: 'If you support Caesar's opinion you will be strengthening my position. If you prefer the opinion of Silanus, it will be easy to justify yourselves as well as me against the accusation of cruelty.'

His peroration produced an unexpected result. The eminent husband of Servilia, coming to the aid of his wife's lover, declared in a rather sheepish manner that he must have been misunderstood, that his opinion 'had been interpreted in a more rigorous sense than he had intended' and that 'he had not meant to suggest the death sentence, because he considered prison to be the supreme penalty for a senator'. After that, Caesar's thesis seemed to triumph and Cicero was obliged to resign himself to this obvious political set-back.

Another dramatic development! The tribune-elect, M. Porcius Cato, called upon to give his opinion, spread himself in recriminations, and, after having severely reprimanded Silanus for denying his original opinion, launched an attack of extreme violence against Caesar. This man, still young (he was then scarcely thirty) but already embittered and disillusioned, reiterated his conviction that the Republic was without the slightest doubt on the highroad to ruin, and he made Caesar responsible for all the evils which were about to descend upon the Roman State. Besides these reasons of a public order he had certain motives of a strictly personal character for his spite against Caesar: he could not forgive him for having led his sister Servilia away from her conjugal duties, and regarded him as an infamous seducer. Availing himself of this opportunity, he gave free vent to his feelings and, finding himself face to face with Caesar, began to overwhelm him with violent threats. Instead of sowing the seeds of fear in the Senate and causing the city's ruin, Caesar should rather have trembled over his own fate and considered himself lucky if he managed to avoid suspicion, 'he who openly and with unparalleled impudence proposed to snatch the enemies of the nation from the rigours of justice; he who, indifferent to the danger of so

powerful a city which had been within two finger-breadths of ruin, reserved his tender sensibility and his tears for monsters who should never have been born', etc., etc.

Caesar listened unmoved to the abuse levelled at him. At a certain moment a man was seen to approach him and furtively slip a note into his hand. This incident did not escape the notice of Cato, who thought it extremely suspicious. He suddenly interrupted his flow of invective and announced to the venerable assembly that such under-hand actions should be exposed. The senators agreed with him and decided that the incriminating document should be read publicly there and then. Without the slightest protest and with a good grace Caesar held out the note to Cato. The latter seized it but, after having glanced through it, immediately changed his attitude and, instead of communicating its content to the Senate, furiously tossed it back to Caesar. It was simply a love letter which Servilia, in her tender alarm at being separated from her lover in these painful circumstances, had sent to Caesar without waiting for the end of the session. 'Here you are, you drunkard!' Cato is supposed to have cried as he threw the fond message straight into the face of the happy recipient. That, at any rate, is what Plutarch tells us. If, however, we are to accept this detail as true we must suppose that Cato's rage had completely blinded him, for he knew quite well that in the matter of drinking Caesar was noted for his outstanding temperance.<sup>86</sup>

The assembly was not anxious to inquire further into the incident. It had other things to worry about. Once more the senators were changing their minds. Under the influence of Cato's devastating speech the majority of them came back to the opinion expressed at the beginning by Silanus and voted for the death of the conspirators. To accentuate Caesar's discomfiture still further they also decreed the confiscation of goods which he had suggested in addition to the sentence of imprisonment. It was in vain that he tried to oppose this measure, pointing out, says Plutarch, 'that it was not just to reject the humane part of his recommendation while adopting the severe measure that went with it'. No one heeded him. Then he appealed, as a last resort, to the tribunes of the people, among whom he was always sure to find devoted friends. This time his appeal was not heard. Not one of them would give him the support of his *veto*. We do not know exactly what Caesar's reaction was, but it appears that a great tumult arose in the assembly. The uproar reached such proportions that a group of Cicero's young guards, who were

always standing armed in the vicinity of the *curia*, rushed into the assembly hall thinking that their master was in danger. They saw Caesar disputing with 'unmeasured heat' and to all appearances attacking Cicero. Thereupon, Suetonius relates, 'they threatened him with death, levelling their unsheathed swords at him'. No one thought of defending him. A space was made round him, and several senators seated near him hastily left their places. 'Scarcely were a few of his friends able to save him by taking him in their arms and covering him with their togas', writes the same author. Caesar allowed himself to be drawn away. 'Really frightened' (*id*), he refrained from appearing in the Senate for the rest of the year.

## The Praetor

WE have seen that during the session of December 5, Q. Lutatius Catulus, 'that model of gentleness, wisdom, and integrity', to quote Cicero, had particularly distinguished himself by his aggressive attitude towards Caesar whose 'consuming' ambition had recently prevented him from crowning a public career which he most sincerely considered to be glorious and deserving of the highest honour. Caesar had a good memory, especially when it came to settling personal accounts. He remembered the incident on the day when he entered upon his duties as praetor. It was the first of January in the year 62. A solemn ceremony was in progress in the Capitol. The Senate was receiving the new consuls in the presence of all the magistrates of the *curia*—praetors, aediles, and quaestors, who likewise had taken up their appointments that day. Instead of taking his place among his colleagues in conformity with the traditional etiquette, Caesar went straight to the Forum, and mounting the platform reserved for him, without more ado, launched a formal accusation against Catulus. The reason given for the indictment appeared sufficiently compromising for the reputation of the 'most venerated of Romans'. For more than fifteen years, Catulus had been in charge of the reconstruction of the temple of Jupiter Capitoline which had been seriously damaged in the fire of 83.<sup>87</sup> The restoration was proceeding very slowly, and Catulus showed no excessive zeal in spurring the workmen on. The time limit had long been passed, but if the end of the operations was not yet in sight, the name of *Catulus curator restituendi Capitolii* was already inscribed for all to admire over the front of the temple.

It appeared to Caesar that such a state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. He proposed that an urgent inquiry should be held, that Catulus should be required to account for all the sums spent, that he should be censured for having allowed the work to drag on so long, and that someone else should be entrusted with its completion. This someone else Caesar was quite prepared to choose: it was Pompey. He was to receive the credit for bringing this pious



task to a successful end. It was his name, therefore, which must be inscribed in the place which Catulus had dared to appropriate. 'It was not in Pompey's interest that Caesar acted thus,' writes Dion Cassius on this subject, 'but in order to capture even more completely the affection of the multitude.' He might have added: 'and to offer at the same time a salutary lesson for the meditation of all those who might have felt disposed to follow Catulus' example'.

On learning that he was being publicly accused of incompetence and embezzlement, the *prince of the Senate* immediately left the ceremony and hurried to the Forum. He placed himself before the praetor's tribune and loudly demanded a hearing. Caesar was presiding, solemnly arrayed in the insignia of his office. Without taking into consideration the age or senatorial rank of the accused, he refused to grant him access to the tribune and obliged him to speak from the foot of the rostra like any simple plebeian. Catulus had to endure this humiliation. Happily his colleagues, who had been given the alarm, came rushing to his assistance and appeared in a compact and threatening formation before the new praetor just as he was beginning to savour what seemed like an easy triumph. Caesar then understood that he had been a little too precipitate and a little too ambitious. Accordingly he beat a retreat and refrained from following up the accusation.

Two days later he began again. This time it was Cato's turn to feel the repercussions of his animosity. The affair was started by the tribune Metellus Nepos, one of Pompey's partisans, who, during the recent Catilinarian conspiracy, had proposed a law urgently recalling the general and his army to Italy 'to guard and save threatened Rome'. The Senate, swayed by the vigorous opposition of Cato, had refused, and Metellus promised that as soon as he came into office he would submit the law directly to the people. This is what he was proposing to do in the course of the morning of January 3. During the night of the 2nd and 3rd, he had the Forum occupied by men armed at his own expense, and at daybreak he came to take his place beside Caesar who, likewise very early abroad, was already on the platform intending, in his capacity of praetor, to give a semi-official support to Pompey's friend.

Cato on his side had prepared for the struggle, but he made the mistake of sleeping late that morning, and he arrived with his colleague Minucius Thermus when all the seats on the platform were already occupied. Disdainful of the guards, who did not dare to bar his way,

he mounted the steps and ostentatiously placed himself between Caesar and Metellus, 'in order to prevent them from consulting together', says Plutarch. This appeared to disconcert the two accomplices. 'Metellus and Caesar did not know what line to take', writes the same author. 'But the right-minded people [the senatorial party, be it understood], full of admiration for Cato's attitude, his courage, and his firmness, rallied round, calling out to him to fear nothing.' Fortified by this encouragement he did not waver. We will let Plutarch describe the scene that followed :

Just as the recorder is about to take the law in his hands, Cato objects to his reading it aloud. Thereupon Metellus seizes the document and begins to read it ; Cato snatches it from Metellus. Metellus, who knows it by heart, wants to recite it. Thermus puts his hand over his mouth and smothers his voice.

Then Metellus ordered his men to charge. They obeyed ; and the crowd was dispersed. Cato was taken to the temple of the Dioscuri where he found refuge. Once the place was empty and his enemies in flight, Metellus tried to get the law passed in the presence of a few supernumeraries. Unfortunately he was not quick enough and gave his antagonists sufficient time to recover their wits and to return armed and supported by troops. This time it was Metellus' turn to run away. He departed, covering the opposing party with insults and threats of Pompey's vengeance. Caesar left in silence.

The Senate assembled towards the end of the day, and Caesar was asked to give an account of his conduct. This he did in his own name and in that of the absent Metellus. Of his speech, taken down by the scribes, several different versions were still in circulation at the time of Augustus. This leads us to suppose that it must have aroused keen interest. Yet, as none of these versions have come down to us, it is impossible to form an idea of what it contained. We only know that the session was prolonged 'beyond the usual time'. It lasted so long that 'the people [more accurately, Caesar's supporters] gathered in a crowd, surrounded the Senate uttering threats, and vehemently demanded that Caesar should be allowed to come out'. The *patres* complied with this request, but that did not prevent them from suspending his powers of office and thus forbidding him to carry out his duties. He took no notice of their interdiction. To be sure, J. Carcopino affirms that 'Caesar edified public opinion by his

deference to senatorial decrees, and remained cloistered in his house'.<sup>88</sup> To this version I prefer that of Suetonius who had the advantage of living closer to the event: 'Nevertheless,' he tells us, 'Caesar dared to remain at his post and continued to administer justice.'

This was an insolent act of defiance flung at the Senate. Caesar hoped, no doubt, in view of the recent popular demonstration in his favour, to intimidate his enemies who, fearing to provoke a new uprising of the masses, would not risk using armed force to ensure the carrying out of the senatorial sentence. This time his calculations proved to be wrong. The Senate did not hesitate to see the matter through, and was determined to use all the means which the law placed at its disposal to prevent Caesar from officiating. Then it was his turn to give in. When he heard of the Senate's decision, 'he sent away his lictors,' writes Suetonius, 'and, taking off his *praetexta* toga, he secretly took refuge in his home, resolving to keep quiet in view of the circumstances'.

Everything remained calm for two days. On the third there was a great tumult on the *via sacra* in front of the house of the Supreme Pontiff. Caesar's supporters 'in a completely spontaneous outburst' (according to Suetonius) had organized a demonstration in his honour, encouraging him with a great deal of noise to resume the exercise of his official powers and offering him the unlimited co-operation of their muscles to support his cause.

Instead of complying with their demands, Caesar sought to restrain their zeal and to exhort them to respect and obey the laws. This showed a very acute psychological perception on his part. Recent events had made it clear that the extent of his power did not yet compare favourably with that of the Senate, and that it would have been premature to involve himself in an open and decisive struggle on the Catilinarian pattern, since this would have infallibly led to the rapid development of a total civil war. It was better for the moment to make use of indirect methods, and, while keeping up the appearance of constitutional legality, as we should say nowadays, to consolidate his position for future action at the price of temporary concessions. These calculations turned out to be perfectly correct. On learning of Caesar's action in moderating the demonstration of the crowd, the Senate, 'who had been prepared for something quite different', sent a delegation to thank him for his wise attitude. Then, 'having sent for him to come to the *curia*, they overwhelmed him with enthusiastic praises, restoring all his prerogatives and revoking

their previous decision'. Thus Suetonius relates the end of this edifying story.

It is scarcely necessary to say that it was only a short truce. A certain Lucius Vettius, of whom we shall hear more in the course of this history, presented himself one day to the *quaesitor*<sup>89</sup> Novius Niger to apprise him of the fact that he could furnish formal proof of Caesar's complicity in the Catilinarian conspiracy, and would undertake to produce an authentic note addressed to the leader by Caesar himself.

Who was this Vettius, and where did he come from?

We have practically no information about his civil standing, but we do know that he was one of Cicero's followers and that he had served as an informer in the Catilinarian affair. Should it be concluded that the step taken by Vettius was inspired by his former 'employer'? We have no grounds for certainty in this matter, but the equivocal attitude which Cicero continued to adopt towards Caesar leads us to believe that at any rate he must have been fully aware of the action of his 'collaborator'.

It was not without significance that at the same time a well-known 'Ciceronian', the senator Quintus Curius, thought it necessary to declare publicly that he had obtained from Catiline himself information of a similar nature implicating Caesar. After this the affair grew in importance. The word of Quintus Curius carried weight; he had just been granted official recognition 'for having been the first to reveal the plan of the conspirators'. If, in addition, the letter promised by Vettius were to be produced, a formal lawsuit would be inevitable, and the fate of the men sentenced on December 5 was a fair indication of what Caesar in his turn might expect. Besides, Novius Niger seems to have believed in the denunciation; otherwise he would not have acted upon it, knowing what penalties he would risk in considering a groundless accusation.

The proof that Caesar perfectly understood the serious danger which suddenly threatened him is seen in the fact that he was obliged to take a step which was particularly humiliating to his self-esteem.

He had to bring himself to ask for Cicero's testimony that at the time when Catiline was preparing for action he had communicated certain information about the conspiracy to the consul. Cicero magnanimously confirmed his declaration. No doubt he hoped that in saving him he was morally destroying him in the eyes of the people's party. It turned out quite otherwise. Afterwards, realizing his mistake, Cicero expressed—to no purpose, of course—bitter and

belated regrets. As for Caesar, scarcely had he been delivered from the threat hanging over his head before he set about squaring accounts with those who had so imprudently embarked upon this adventure. He had Curius deprived of his honours. He sent the *quaesitor* to prison 'for having allowed a senior magistrate to be accused before him'. As for Vettius, to quote Suetonius, 'they seized his fortune, pillaged his personal property ; he was manhandled and almost torn to pieces in the full assembly before the rostra ; and then Caesar had him thrown into prison'.

## Scandal of the Feast of the Bona Dea

**A** PART from the stormy incidents which marked the beginning of Caesar's praetorship, we know nothing about his activities while he was in office. We have not even any information as to the share allotted to him in the general work of the praetors, nor do we know what the task of the six *quaestiones* was, over which he was called to preside. Suetonius does mention a curious incident which must have taken place at about that time, but though it is characteristic of the man, it throws no fresh light upon the magistrate.

The incident in question arose in full Senate during the discussion concerning Prince Masintha. This young Numidian had contracted certain pecuniary obligations towards his sovereign. After a while he concluded that he had been pouring his money into the royal chests long enough and he stopped paying the *stipendia* which he owed. King Hiempsal, judging that his rights were being violated, charged his son Juba, who was staying in Rome at the time, to bring a complaint before the Senate requesting it to use its authority to force the recalcitrant debtor to pay what he owed. Caesar agreed to defend the case of Masintha. He brought so much ardour to the task that the legal debate ended with all the appearances of a prize fight, in the course of which Caesar, despite the fact that his courteous and distinguished manners had become proverbial, did not hesitate to fall upon the 'opposite party', seizing him by the beard and shaking him with vigour. This kind of argument, however, did not win the case, and his client was condemned to prison until all the sums due from him had been paid. At this, Caesar was seen to push aside the guards who had gone up to Masintha in order to take him to his place of confinement, and, snatching the handsome youth from their hands, he led him out of the *curia* to his own house, where henceforth he was to live very pleasantly, safe from all pursuers.

The paucity of information about Caesar's praetorship leads us to suppose that during the months which followed his reinstatement nothing special happened in the realm of official duties. This can

scarcely be said of his private life. In that domain he became the victim of an unfortunate misadventure which placed him in the most delicate of situations.

It must have been noticed from the preceding chapters that Caesar could hardly be considered as an outstanding model of conjugal fidelity. However, we might add that his second wife gave him the same treatment as she received, in which respect, incidentally, she was only following the example of most Roman women of high society. In short, she had lovers. The last one to date was called P. Clodius.

He was a young patrician, whose graceful and effeminate appearance contrasted strangely with his particularly violent temperament as a popular agitator, always ready to deliver a daring blow and not hesitating, should occasion arise, to answer for the consequences with his own person. The unsavoury adventure of which he was the hero during the night of the festival of the *Bona Dea*<sup>90</sup> in Caesar's house is sufficiently familiar. It is, however, worth while to recall it here before trying to discover its real implications. We will follow the version of Plutarch, who, of all ancient historians, has spread himself with the greatest complacency on this episode.

In the year of Caesar's praetorship, Pompeia was responsible for celebrating the feast. Clodius, still a beardless youth, put on a musician's dress, in which he looked exactly like a young maiden. He found the doors open and was admitted without the slightest hitch by one of Pompeia's slaves who was in the secret. She went to tell her mistress of his arrival, and as this took some time Clodius did not dare to wait in the place where she had left him. He was wandering about the vast house, carefully avoiding the lights, when he met one of the women of Aurelia [Caesar's mother] who, thinking she was addressing one of her own sex, wanted to stop him and invited him to play with her. Surprised at his refusal, she drew him to the middle of the hall and asked this unknown 'girl' for her name. Clodius replied that he was waiting for Abra, Pompeia's slave, but his voice betrayed him. The woman, rejoining her companions in the light, cried out that she had just surprised a man in the apartments. [Needless to say, it was strictly forbidden for men to be present at this festival.] All the women were seized with fear: Aurelia had the ceremonies stopped immediately and the sacred objects veiled. She gave orders for the doors to be shut

and went herself with torches to search the whole house. . . . Clodius was found hidden in the room of the slave who had admitted him to Pompeia's apartments. He was recognized by all the women and ignominiously turned out. They left the house themselves that very night and went to tell their husbands what had happened.

This scene as described by Plutarch appears to be quite authentic. Nevertheless, it calls for some comment and deserves a slightly more far-reaching analysis than the historians concerned with it have hitherto made. In the first place, at the time when Clodius embarked on his 'mad adventure', which was, perhaps, not as mad as it seems, he most certainly belonged to Cicero's party, and we know that in the Catilinarian affair he had served him 'with the greatest zeal'. On the other hand, his relations with the husband of his mistress were decidedly cool.

Another question: did Cicero know of the escapade? Certain allusions which he made afterwards point to the fact that he was not only aware of it but had personally superintended its preparations. Notice how he described the 'slowness of the disguise' effected by Clodius! How precisely he noted the way he was shod, how his veil was arranged, the care he took to bind his chest with the *strophium*! Even the difficulties of dressing the young man, of adapting the sleeves of the tunic to his arms, did not escape him! These are unquestionably the direct impressions of an eye-witness. Furthermore, we know that before going to the festival Clodius went to see Cicero at his house. It seems likely that a personage of his age and position had other things to occupy his time, more important than the fancy dress of a hare-brained youth preparing for an amorous adventure. If he was present at these preparations it must have been because the affair interested him in some way. Where did the interest lie?

Cicero, who was every bit as clever a schemer as Caesar, had come to understand that it was impossible to defeat his discerning and wily rival in the open Forum. He had seen that Caesar's recent humiliation following the Catilinarian affair had in no way lowered him in the eyes of the multitude, who readily forgave the strong for acts they would condemn without mercy in the weak. But if as a public figure he seemed invulnerable, he was far less so as a private individual. The dignity of *pontifex maximus* which he had recently assumed



involved extremely severe moral obligations. The slightest stain on the reputation of his wife would tarnish his own. What a triumph for his enemies if a scandal broke out in the bosom of his family ! And what an easy prey was this Pompeia, who, blinded by her passion for the irresistible Clodius, was ready to discard the most elementary rules of caution to satisfy her desire. It only remained to take advantage of the situation. The mere fact of being virtually caught in the act of adultery provided no more than a piece of gossip only too frequent in the annals of Roman society. It was quite another matter if the house of the *pontifex maximus* was desecrated, and if this happened during the celebration of a feast which had all the characteristics of a religious rite and which assigned to Caesar's wife, who thanks to her official position presided over it, the rôle of priestess. It is possible that the Clodius plan included some further developments which are unknown and that a servant's blunder prevented its full realization. Anyhow, it achieved its essential object : an open scandal and the spreading of the news throughout the whole city by daybreak.

Everybody was wondering what Caesar would do. They expected him immediately to make some drastic gesture which would result in proceedings being taken against the bold seducer, who, it was well known, was not a man meekly to allow himself to be brought to judgment and who might have numerous surprises ready for his accuser.

Such hopes were doomed to disappointment. Nothing happened. Caesar kept absolute silence and assumed an attitude of complete indifference, as though all this did not concern him in the least. Inquisitive minds lost their way in conjecture, trying to explain his conduct, which seemed so strange and yet in reality was not strange at all. For it would be an insult to Caesar's intelligence not to give him credit for the small degree of perspicacity that was needed to guess the secret aim of those who were hiding behind Clodius and guiding his steps.

Dion Cassius has given a psychological sketch of Caesar which is exceedingly interesting. It contains the following passage which better than anything enables us to understand his conduct on this occasion :

He [Caesar] never punished in anger and on the spot. He never allowed himself to be carried away by his feelings. He watched for the most favourable moment and most often struck

unexpectedly, trying not so much to appear to avenge himself as to arrange everything to suit his interests without arousing envy. He therefore punished mysteriously and when it was least expected : first, so as to safeguard his reputation and not to seem to be acting in anger, and secondly, so that people would not be on their guard through any sort of foreboding nor try to do him an injury before receiving one.

This passive attitude exasperated his enemies. The Senate, officially informed of the affair, referred it to the pontiffs, who declared that the sacrifices, polluted by the presence of a man, must be repeated, but who refrained from any other pronouncement which might prejudice their chief. As for Caesar, he sent a letter of repudiation to his wife, thus placing her under the obligation of leaving the conjugal dwelling. That was all. There was no suggestion of legal proceedings. Certain members of the Catulus-Cicero clique finally decided that this could not be allowed. If Caesar himself did not intend to defend his honour and to avenge the insult to the *Bona Dea*, others would undertake to do so and would know how to punish the sacrilege. An accusation was accordingly drawn up against Clodius.<sup>91</sup> Among these benevolent accusers figured Cicero in person. In view of the friendly relations which existed between him and Clodius this fact seems strange enough at first sight. Plutarch gives us the explanation. It was due to a rather commonplace domestic dispute in the household of the illustrious barrister. His wife Terentia, an intractable and shrewish individual who had a difficult disposition and, according to this author, 'governed her husband', had her suspicions that he wanted to get rid of her and contract another marriage. Her successor, it seemed, was already chosen : Clodius' own sister. Rightly or wrongly the alarmed woman in her hatred confused the sister with the brother, whose 'underhand scheming' with Cicero seemed to her very suspect. One day the storm broke. The great orator could not hold out for long, and, to escape from the flood of abuse which threatened to submerge him, promised his wife eternal fidelity and attachment. Then, in order to prove to her that all henceforth was at an end between him and the Clodii, he agreed, in obedience to her formal demand, to appear among the witnesses for the prosecution of his friend and collaborator.

We can guess the reaction of Clodius when he learnt of this sudden change of heart. Not in the least dismayed, he started organizing

his defence with great energy, that is to say, he distributed presents and money in great profusion among the judges on whom his fate was to depend. Naturally, he also called upon his supporters among the people, convinced that their presence in the audience would not fail to produce a healthy effect on the tribunal.

At last the day of the trial arrived. To make more certain of the condemnation of Clodius, his accusers had added to the offences with which he was charged that of an incestuous relationship with one of his sisters, who was married to Lucullus. To increase the effect, the latter even sent for two slaves, who testified to the truth of this fact. Caesar's mother, who was called as a witness, gave a detailed description of the crime which had taken place in her son's house. The youthful Julia confirmed the evidence of her mother. Then it was the turn of her brother Julius to appear before the judges. When questioned, however, he declared 'that he had no knowledge of the actions imputed to the accused'.

'Since this declaration seemed very odd,' writes Plutarch, 'the prosecutor asked him why then he had sent away his wife.' It was at this point that Caesar pronounced the celebrated sentence: 'Because my wife must be above suspicion.' Suetonius records it somewhat differently by giving it a more general meaning: 'It is because in my opinion the members of my family should be as exempt from suspicion as they are from crime.' Finally Dion Cassius, whose information is often based on valuable findings, gives us a third version which, while apparently more vague, seems to me to come nearest to the truth: 'A virtuous woman should not only be free from any fault, she should not even be touched by a shameful suspicion.'

Clodius' defence, both cynical and naïve, consisted of firmly denying that he had been in Pompeia's house at the time. According to him, he had been absent from Rome that day, and indeed far away from the capital. It was then that Cicero spoke, formally giving him the lie by declaring that on that very day Clodius had come to his house 'to discuss a certain matter'—in other words, that he had not left the city at all. After hearing the witnesses, the judges proceeded with their deliberations, while an armed guard protected them from the audience, which was beginning to threaten them. The acquittal was pronounced by thirty-one votes to twenty-five, so that when Clodius, at the end of the session, sneeringly pointed out that the judges had scorned Cicero's evidence he was able to reply: 'On the contrary, there were twenty-five who believed me, since they condemned you,

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and thirty-one who did not want to believe you, because they acquitted you only after pocketing your money.' <sup>92</sup> Meanwhile the aged Catulus was giving vent to his disappointment by telling the tribunal with bitter irony: 'You were right to ask for guards to protect you, for fear that the wine-pots which you have received might be taken from you.'

*Propraetor in Spain*

IT was not until after the Clodius trial was over that the Senate hastily proceeded to the *sortitio*, or distribution of the praetorial provinces. They were behind-hand with this and we are left to wonder what can have been the reasons for the unusual delay. Caesar found himself appointed to the governorship of Further Spain, where eight years earlier he had officiated as quaestor. A new difficulty immediately presented itself. His creditors announced that they would oppose his departure until he had discharged his debts. As the state of his finances made this impossible, it began to look very much as though the new governor of Further Spain might be obliged to take the road to the prison for insolvent debtors instead of the one leading to his province. Once more, he was forced to turn to Crassus. Once more, this man, whose purse still proved inexhaustible, came to his help, this time in more generous measure than ever. He made himself personally liable for the sum of 830 talents to satisfy the most insistent among the creditors.<sup>93</sup> With the others, who were less unreasonable, Caesar was able to arrive at an arrangement on the strength of the riches which would come to him as a result of booty in Spain.

All this took time and it was June before Caesar was at last able to start. Even then he left Rome without waiting to complete all the administrative formalities connected with his post: recruiting of personnel, military orders, budget, etc. This haste leads us to suppose that he feared some new obstacles might arise at the last minute to prevent him leaving the capital.

Caesar took three weeks—a normal time in those days—to accomplish the journey which was beginning to be familiar to him, from Rome to Corduba. We know nothing of his adventures on the way, except that he was accompanied by the young Numidian whom he had snatched from the hands of justice the year before.<sup>94</sup> The famous sentence he is supposed to have uttered while passing through a humble Alpine village, '*I would rather be first among these barbarians than second in Rome*', has every appearance of being a fable which Plutarch himself

regarded with a certain suspicion. But what we can say with certainty is that he went to Spain with a very precise and realistic plan of action : to remake his fortune at the expense of his future subjects, and to prepare his way to the consulship of the next year by some striking action. He was well acquainted with the environment in which he was going to work and the personalities with whom he would have to deal. Since the time of his quaestorship he had been forming useful connections with the merchants of Gades. When delegates from that town, which had enjoyed the status of an ally since 78, came to Rome to settle various questions of municipal administration, they had applied to him to be received by the Senate. On this occasion Caesar had done them numerous services. Now he would not hesitate to remind them of the fact.

His first thought on arrival was to increase as far as possible the military forces at his disposal. He had under him twenty cohorts forming a total of about ten thousand men. Considering this to be insufficient, he at once instituted a system of local recruiting in his province which enabled him, by making use of native manpower, to form an additional contingent of ten cohorts and so to bring his forces up to thirty cohorts in all. This done, he announced that a punitive expedition would be made against the mountain tribes which dwelt south of the Tagus, and were pillaging the neighbouring cities. Posing as the protector of peaceful populations bent on defending their property and keeping order, Caesar began by calling upon the inhabitants of Mount Herminium to leave their homes and to settle in the plain, there to live henceforth as quiet and honest labourers. 'This was only a pretext,' writes Dion Cassius on this subject, 'for he knew quite well that they would not do so and that their refusal would provide an occasion for declaring war upon them.' That is what happened.

This inaugurated the first military campaign in which Caesar figured as a leader, for his former achievements in Cilicia, when as a youth he had made trial of his prowess, cannot be considered in this connection, being no more than improvised adventures of a purely private nature. For the first time we see Caesar at the head of a regular army, provided with all the necessary war material and maintained by the State. The fact that he was given such a position when he was so totally lacking in military knowledge need surprise no one. It is perhaps one of the most striking phenomena in the history of the Roman Republic, this chance of gaining glory by

startling military achievements which it offered to simple farmers, lawyers, or bankers who, until they were called upon to command an army were completely ignorant of the most elementary principles of the art of war.

The summer of the year 61 marks a distinct break in Caesar's career and introduces a new era. For eighteen years his life in Rome had been one of brilliance and ease ; he had spent his days amidst feasts and banquets, squandering millions with lavish recklessness, collecting mistresses from every class of society, delighting in subtle intrigues and exquisite revenges. Now, at the age of forty, he suddenly changed his whole way of life. He, who had had himself carried in a litter for the shortest distances in the city, now rode for hours and hours through almost impassable roads on a savage and restive charger which he managed with extraordinary skill. He, who had felt ill at ease as soon as the buckle of his belt was fastened a little tighter than usual, now donned a superb and massive cuirass of which he readily bore the weight and pressure and which henceforth was to be an integral part of his favourite costume. He, who had never dared to touch his hair with so much as a finger for fear of disturbing the skilful way it was arranged, now exposed it all day long to the wind and sun and did not trouble to hide his ever-increasing baldness from the gaze of his soldiers.<sup>95</sup> On the threshold of his new career, Caesar unhesitatingly stripped himself of all the old habits which might hinder the unbridled race towards glory on which he was starting.

His expedition against the Lusitanian mountaineers probably took place in the latter part of August or the beginning of September. Their resistance was quickly broken down and they surrendered. But for Caesar this was only a beginning. The clearing of the region of Herminium had enabled him to reach the valley north of this mountain, which was inhabited by peaceful shepherds and farmers. They also chose to resist. To start with, they sent their women and belongings to the other side of the Douro. Then they awaited the arrival of the enemy. These peasants, who were both cunning and simple, had noticed that Caesar requisitioned all the cattle wherever he passed. This gave them the idea of driving their flocks ahead, in the hope that the Romans, tempted by this prey which seemed to be theirs for the taking, would scatter throughout the countryside in order to capture it. Their calculations proved false. 'Caesar did not trouble about the herds but attacked the barbarians and vanquished them.' This is how Dion Cassius puts it.

Just when this first campaign might have been considered at an end, the defeated mountaineers hastily regrouped themselves and reopened the battle. Caesar replied with another offensive which this time he carried much farther. In the hope of escaping from the invader, the inhabitants of Mount Herminium withdrew to the Atlantic coast. Having reached the ocean, they left dry land and took refuge on an island. Caesar, who had been pursuing them without respite, coming to the extreme limit of the continent wanted in his turn to cross over in order to destroy them utterly. Having no boats, he was forced to fall back on a primitive device: rafts were constructed and a detachment of his troops used them to attempt a landing. It was a disaster. Of all those who took part in this adventure only one was able to get away by swimming. As soon as the others reached their destination they were massacred by the enemy.

Caesar bore this defeat with resignation; he did not persevere in his efforts, but stopped hostilities. In point of fact, bad weather was beginning and operations in this coastal area, which still lacked all means of communication, were becoming increasingly difficult. So he returned to Corduba and his troops went into winter quarters.

Caesar doubtless devoted the following months to the internal affairs of his province. There was still a great deal to be done. All things considered, the political situation had not changed since the time of Caesar's quaestorship. The same antagonism still reigned between the towns which favoured Roman domination and the refractory cities which refused to recognize the foreign yoke and, for lack of anything better to do, entrenched themselves in a sort of passive resistance. The memory of Sertorius was still fresh, and quarrels between Roman partisans and their adversaries did not cease. Furthermore, the economic situation continued to provide grounds for acute anxiety, and that running sore common to all ancient societies—the constant accumulation of private debts—was sapping the lifeblood of the province. Caesar, who had special reasons for being interested in the fate of the unfortunate debtors, undertook to lighten to some extent the burdens which were weighing them down. An edict decreed that in future only two-thirds of their income could be seized by their creditors, whereas previously they had had the right to take the whole of it. It was also thanks to Caesar that the annual contribution which Metellus Pius had imposed upon the Spaniards at the time of the campaign against Sertorius was abolished.



The city of Gades received preferential treatment. This rich and flourishing town, which owed its commercial prosperity to the victory of Rome over Carthage, its former redoubtable patron, had been one of the first among the large cities of Spain to accept the 'benefits' of the protection which the Republic granted to the communities it had subdued. The inhabitants, mostly merchants and seafarers, gained considerable advantages from their relations with Rome, and it is open to question whether it was not at their instigation that Caesar chose as his first objective the punitive expedition against the mountain tribes of Herminium, whose frequent raids made the roads dangerous and interfered with the traffic of their merchandise.

One of these rich citizens of Gades was specially singled out by Caesar and admitted to the circle of his most intimate friends and confidants.

Basing their conclusions on the semitic sound of his name (Balbus—Baal) the historians have supposed that the Spaniard L. Cornelius Balbus was of Phoenician origin; this is quite possible, but of no particular interest in this context. What is more worthy of notice is the fact that, even at the time of Sertorius, the young man had shown ardently pro-Roman sympathies, and had rendered invaluable services to the commander of the Roman troops that had come to fight against his compatriots. He was rewarded by being granted the right of citizenship.

Caesar must have made Balbus' acquaintance when he was in Spain the first time. Perhaps he met him again in Rome, where Balbus had come in the course of the following years as a delegate from his town. We do not know whether Caesar took him back to Spain or whether he invited him to join his general staff after he arrived in the country. All we know is that Balbus was officially appointed *praefectus fabrum* in charge of the companies of workmen in Caesar's army. His activities were not limited, however, to the mere superintendence of manual labour in the army. He very soon became Caesar's confidential adviser, his faithful and devoted collaborator. We have the impression that his suggestions and counsels were listened to and acted upon, and, according to Cicero, it was to him that his native town owed the benefits which Caesar bestowed upon it.

The good weather had scarcely returned before Caesar gave orders to reopen military operations. The mountaineers, blockaded on their island, must be made to pay dearly for the defeat of the previous year.

The lesson had not been lost upon Caesar. His first care was to make sure of having the necessary means of transport. A fleet was requisitioned in Gades and a convoy carrying troops set out following the coast northwards. This time, the landing was effected without difficulty and the enemy exterminated to the last man.

After having thus taken his revenge and completely attained the object which he had set himself when he declared war without mercy on the 'mountain brigands', Caesar had no idea of laying down his arms and returning to Corduba. Since this war-like adventure had brought him to the farthest point of his province, where the immensity of wide unknown spaces opened before him, a haunting desire for new conquests had taken complete possession of his soul. He seemed to hear the imperative call of destiny, decreeing the way he must take across the wild raging of the ocean; and he started. For the first time in the history of the world the Atlantic bore upon its heaving shoulders the weight of the Roman cohorts. So it was that, driven onward by his unquenchable ambition, Caesar reached Brigantium (the modern Corunna), whose inhabitants saw with terror what seemed to them monsters of an unknown species approaching their shores. They offered no resistance and willingly surrendered. A new world had thus been added to the domain of the Republic, providing it with a source of unsuspected wealth.

Caesar was not the last to profit by it and, judging that these conquests had given him an unalterable claim to the gratitude of his fellow citizens, he left his province without further delay, hailed under the glorious title of *imperator* by his soldiers, who had been abundantly provided with booty at the expense of the newly subdued country.<sup>96</sup> The law did not allow of his departure before the arrival of his successor. Caesar took no notice of this. He was in a hurry to get back to Rome: the consular elections were about to take place.

## *Candidate for the Consulship*

AT the beginning of 61, and probably even before, it was known that Caesar intended to present himself in July 60 for the consular elections of 59. Already his prestige was so great that all those who had thought of aspiring to the high office preferred to stay away, not caring to enter the lists against such a redoubtable opponent. He was therefore practically the only candidate, and his election was as good as assured in advance. It only remained to discuss who would be called upon to share the consular responsibilities with him. This was a question of capital importance. Should the second consul be chosen from among Caesar's partisans, it would mean that his will would go unchecked and that henceforth he would control the destinies of the State as its absolute master. On the other hand, the presence of a colleague who would not hesitate if need be to use his power of veto might serve as a brake to moderate the rash schemes and dictatorial gestures which, according to general opinion, were to be expected from Caesar.

Indeed, the electoral campaign was focused on the second consular seat, and seemed likely to be a contest between a candidate of Caesar's party and one representing the 'opposition', or, in other words, the Senate.

L. Luceius, a distinguished but colourless man of considerable wealth, had for some time been nursing the ambition of becoming the first magistrate of the Republic.<sup>97</sup> He had been prepared to come forward as a candidate at the elections of the preceding year, but had been obliged to give way before a protégé of Pompey, of whom he was incidentally a respectful friend. It is possible that in compensation the great man had promised him his gracious support for the following year. At any rate, parleys were begun, perhaps at Pompey's suggestion, between Luceius and Caesar with a view to an electoral agreement based upon some form of reciprocal co-operation; the one was to supply the funds necessary to buy the votes,<sup>98</sup> the other the weight of his name. Thus Caesar would benefit by Luceius' money and Luceius by Caesar's influence.

Almost at the same time L. Piso, one of Caesar's confidential

agents, passed on to him a similar proposal from his former colleague Bibulus, whose fortune, as we have already seen, had been invaluable to Caesar the aedile in gaining the favour of the masses. Bibulus, too, was burning with eagerness to occupy the post of consul.

Caesar refused his offer and came to an understanding with Lucceius. Why? He knew that the latter belonged to Cicero's circle, and that it was through him that Catiline had been publicly accused before the tribunal. Nevertheless, drawing a veil over this unpleasant memory, Caesar preferred to forgo the agreement with Bibulus, who had after all done him real services. He had misgivings about his impulsive character and his touchiness, and he was afraid that the man would not prove a sufficiently tractable assistant. Above all, he had found out that his former colleague's fortune, seriously impaired by his own lavish expenditures, was far from having regained its previous stability. On the other hand, he could not afford to lose sight of the fact that Lucceius was Pompey's man and that he, Caesar, still had great need of this leader's support in the battles he was preparing to wage against his political opponents.

Having failed with Caesar, Bibulus turned towards the Senate, which received him with open arms. They found in him the ideal candidate, destined to counterbalance the influence of Caesar. His father-in-law Cato, who had gradually become the moving spirit of the conservative party, brought him the full and enthusiastic support of the authority which he enjoyed in the Senate; and, as his candidate had made it known discreetly among the senators that his means were no longer sufficient to meet unaided the expenses of an electoral campaign, he proposed to his colleagues that they should get up a subscription in order to raise the necessary funds for buying votes in Bibulus' favour. He apparently considered that when the interests of the State were involved the principle of an austere civic code must be set aside, and that to hesitate about the corruption of electors—a practice which he himself had so often stigmatized—would be out of place.

Meanwhile, Caesar, pressing on with all speed, had reached the gates of Rome. Informed of his recent military successes and already in possession of a large quantity of more or less voluntary gifts which the Spanish cities had been 'invited' to pay into the Roman treasury, the Senate could not avoid awarding him triumphal honours.

This had been Caesar's most ardent desire. He had set his heart on organizing the celebration in a particularly brilliant manner so as to capture the imagination of his fellow citizens, and to create a

sumptuous prelude to the fast approaching exercise of consular dignity. But he needed time, and at the moment Caesar found himself in a great difficulty.

The law required that those seeking public appointments should come in person to offer themselves as candidates. On the other hand, an aspirant to triumphal honours was not allowed to cross the city boundaries before the ceremony had taken place. Thus Caesar was forbidden access to Rome, which made it impossible for him to carry out the prescribed formalities. He thought of a way out: he sent a request asking the Senate to authorize his friends to make the necessary application on his behalf.

The session of the Senate during which Caesar's request was communicated to the assembly appears to have been turbulent. It is difficult to give a description of it as the information we have on the subject is very fragmentary.

The session was dominated by one fact of capital importance: it took place on the eve of the day when the list of candidates would be closed. This meant that the decision made at the session would necessarily be final. If the Senate refused to grant Caesar the dispensation for which he was asking, he would have no time to prepare another plan of action.

According to Plutarch, 'most of the senators were inclined to grant him this authorization'. That seems surprising enough, given the open hostility of the majority of the Senate towards Caesar. Suetonius, on the contrary, declares that 'many opposed it'. But it is well to note that he does not use the word *majority* in evaluating the opposition to Caesar's request. We are not, therefore, obliged to reject Plutarch's statement altogether. There is yet another thing which supports him: the famous 'verbal obstruction' on the part of Cato, who could fairly lay claim to the honour of being considered as the inventor of this curious practice, since then firmly established among the parliamentary customs of a wide variety of peoples in all ages. Let us take up Plutarch once more: 'Seeing that, to please Caesar, they would end by consenting, he [Cato] went on speaking for the rest of the day and thus prevented any conclusion being reached.'

The days are hot in July, and long. Giving proof of an exemplary physical endurance, Cato occupied the tribune without stopping his speech for an instant, until the evening shadows began to spread over the *curia* and the session had to be closed in conformity with the rules. And as, through lack of time, no vote had been taken, the decision about the dispensation remained in abeyance, which was equivalent to a refusal.

If Cato thought it necessary to perform this feat and to make use of such a singular method, it must mean that he was not sure the results of the vote would be in favour of his opinion. There are grounds, then, for concluding that the number of senators prepared to consent to Caesar's request must have been large enough to make it preferable to prevent the voting by no matter what means. He certainly would not have chosen the means he did if he had been certain that the majority of his colleagues were behind him.

We are therefore entitled to ask why an assembly composed for the most part of Caesar's opponents, instead of seizing the opportunity to create difficulties for him, showed itself ready to facilitate his rise to power. The senators' attitude, which at first sight appears so strange, can only be explained by supposing that they knew in advance of Caesar's firm intention to sacrifice everything to attain the consulship, and realized that if he did not get his way he would not stop even at the most drastic solutions. Under these circumstances, many among them must have said to themselves that it was better to yield to Caesar with a good grace, since by refusing his request they would in no way stop the natural course of his ambition. That a man like Cato should not have admitted the logic of this reasoning, and should have obstinately held out in a vain and ludicrous attempt at resistance, need not surprise us. With him it was a matter of temperament and personal irritability rather than a sound and realistic understanding of the political situation.

Actually, it all turned out as might have been foreseen. When Caesar learnt of the circumstances which had prevented the Senate from voting, he immediately gave up the triumphal entry, cancelled all the vast and costly preparations, and the next day, at the appointed time, he presented himself before the *comitia* as a simple private citizen wearing the traditional white toga and carried out in person the customary formalities. 'He did not trouble any more about the triumph,' writes Dion Cassius in this connection, 'hoping that once he was consul he could distinguish himself by more numerous and striking exploits and obtain a more brilliant triumph.' Caesar was unanimously elected. There was only one shadow to dim his victory: the considerable funds which the senators had put at the disposal of their candidate had enabled him to purchase massive batches of votes, and thus Caesar found himself encumbered with a tiresome colleague in whom the senatorial party had placed their every hope.

## Formation of the First Triumvirate

THE agreement which historians, following the ancient writers, refer to as the *first triumvirate* is closely connected with Caesar's election to the consulship. Although the importance and the implications of this celebrated pact are supposed to have been elucidated, its actual nature and, above all, the time of its formation are the subject of discussions which tend in our days to become more and more heated and more and more meticulous, without reaching any positive result. The problem can be stated thus: When was the pact made? Was it before or after the election? In other words, was Caesar raised to the consulship as a direct result of it, or was the formation of the alliance between Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar the initial act in the political programme of the new consul? The difference between the two alternatives is obvious.

First, it must be stated that, as the three associates had agreed to keep their pact absolutely secret at the start, even their contemporaries did not learn of its existence until it had long become an accomplished fact.<sup>99</sup>

We also notice that when it comes to determining the date of this event or the motives which led up to it, ancient writers for the most part offer completely contradictory versions. In order to clear the ground, it is necessary to make a preliminary classification of the texts, grouping them in two categories: those which place the formation of the triumvirate *before*, and those which place it *after* Caesar's election.

### BEFORE THE ELECTION

ASINIUS POLLIO. There is nothing left except a brief reference in Horace (Carm. II, 1) which states that the *History of the Civil War* by that author begins with the formation of the triumvirate *during the consulship of Metellus*.

LIVY. Here again, in the absence of the missing text, we have to content ourselves with the *Summary* which states: 'Caesar stands for the consulship and aspires to dominate the State. An alliance is

formed between the three most powerful citizens : Pompey, Crassus and Caesar. Elected consul, Caesar proposes an agrarian law.' (103)

DION CASSIUS : 'Having entered Rome, Caesar sought the consulship and gained the affection of all the citizens, especially that of Pompey and Crassus, to such an extent that these two men, divided by mutual enmity, came over to his side.' (XXXVII, 54)

PLUTARCH : 1. 'Presenting himself to the *comitia* and supported by Crassus and Pompey, he [Caesar] was raised with great acclamation to the dignity of consul.' (Caes., 14). 2. 'Having found Crassus and Pompey divided against each other . . . Caesar endeavoured to restore good relations between them . . . supported by their influence he was declared consul by the vote of the people.' (Crass., 14). 3. 'Caesar was standing for his first consulship. Being well aware that, so long as Crassus and Pompey were on bad terms he could not combine with the one without having the other for an enemy, he sought to reconcile them.' (Pomp., 47). 4. 'Giving up the triumph, Caesar entered Rome, solicited the friendship of Pompey and stood for the consulship.' (Cat., 36).

APPIAN : 'Pompey wanted the Senate to ratify several arrangements he had made concerning the countries he had just subdued. Jealousy prompted many to oppose him. . . . Indignant, he gained Caesar's support by promising him on oath to lend him his influence at the next consular election.' (II, 2, 9).

## AFTER THE ELECTION

FLORUS : At that time 'Crassus was an outstanding figure on account of the brilliance of his birth, his wealth, his influence. . . . Caesar drew high hopes from his eloquence, his courage, and from the consulship he had just obtained. Yet Pompey surpassed them both. . . . As all were equally eager for power, they easily came to an agreement to seize control of the Republic.' (II, 13, 8-9).

VELLEIUS PATERCULUS : 'Caesar was consul when that association of power was formed between Pompey, Crassus, and himself which was so fatal to the Republic, to the entire world, and later to themselves.'

SURTONIUS : 'The authorities took care to assign to the future consuls unimportant departments such as those of timber and pastures.



Driven to extremes by this injustice, Caesar set about heaping attentions upon Cn. Pompey . . . he reconciled him to M. Crassus . . . and concluded an alliance with them, according to which nothing was to be done in the State without the agreement of all three.' (19)

If the soundness of a theory could be proved merely by the fact that more references were made to it, we should unquestionably have to choose the one which places the formation of the triumvirate before Caesar's election, and, as a matter of fact, we find that the majority of modern historians have done this. If, on the other hand, we take the trouble to weigh each of these quotations independently, we shall find not only that we become less confident about our theory, but that we are inclined to reconsider the whole nature of the problem.

First of all, we have to eliminate from our argument Asinius Pollio's reference, which has only come down to us second hand, through a fleeting echo from the muse of Horace. Moreover, it can be interpreted in two ways: the fact that it places the formation of the alliance 'during the consulship of Metellus' does not necessarily prove that it took place before the elections—this consulship lasted for another five months afterwards. Neither can the passage from Livy be used for fixing precise limits. It must not be forgotten that it is merely a summary to provide a simple enumeration of the contents of the respective chapters. Now it is known that Livy did not always arrange events in strictly chronological order. There is nothing to prove that in telling us about the formation of the triumvirate—the date of which was controversial even in his own time—he was not giving way to a very legitimate desire to think primarily of the order required by a certain inner logic he was endeavouring to trace in the sequence of events, and which in his mind had to supplement the paucity of material details.

Let us now pass on to the texts which have come down to us in their original form. The three which can be quoted in favour of the theory that the triumvirate was formed *before* the election are of Greek origin. The Latin texts, also three in number, support the theory that it was *after* the election. This division of opinion does not facilitate the solution of the problem, and our uncertainty increases as we proceed to examine the motives which these authors have given to explain the event.

For Suetonius, the agreement of 'the three' is the direct consequence of Caesar's vexation over the assignment of the consular

provinces, which turned out to his disadvantage. Mommsen found this explanation too 'petty' to justify so important an action. It is difficult to express an opinion in this matter. It depends on the psychological reaction of the historian, which is purely subjective and beyond the limits of critical judgment. Caesar's disappointment, to which Suetonius refers, is perfectly understandable and it is logical to suppose that he would have harboured such feelings on learning of this new proof of the Senate's hostility towards him. It is another matter to suggest that this disappointment alone was a sufficient reason for his making such an important and far-reaching decision. Here we do well to be more circumspect, especially if we take into account the indiscriminate way in which Suetonius uses the most reliable testimony and the vague hearsay of the market-places without distinction.

Dion Cassius and Velleius Paterculus confine themselves to a statement of fact and refrain from suggesting motives. Florus contents himself with the summary explanation that the three associates were equally hungry for power. It is Plutarch who provides the most abundant and varied information. Its diversity, even the contradictions which it contains, call for an attentive examination. We distinguish two versions. The first, which is taken from *Caesar* (13-14), *Pompey* (47), and *Crassus* (14), can be summoned up thus: Caesar reconciles Pompey with Crassus to ensure his own election as consul. The second, which is represented by section 36 in *Cato the Younger*, only records the alliance formed between Pompey and Caesar permitting the latter to be elected, after which both formed 'a league against the Republic'. We note that Crassus is not named. He is not mentioned in the agreement, which comprises two people only: Pompey and Caesar. This suggests, in the place of the triumvirate traditionally accepted by history as having the same forms at the time of its first appearance, a kind of *duumvirate* which Crassus was to join later on. Appian, who says that Pompey, exasperated by the ill-will of the Senate, took the initiative in forming an alliance with Caesar, seems to support this view.

We can see from this rudimentary analysis how delicate and complex the problem is. When was the triumvirate formed: before or after Caesar's election to the consulship? On whose initiative: Caesar's or Pompey's? What was the end in view: the success of Caesar's candidacy, or the seizure of the State? All these questions remain unanswered and the many solutions to which they have given rise seem by their very variety to exclude each other.

Under these conditions we wonder whether the problem itself has been stated accurately, whether it is right to treat as a single act a series of successive transactions which at the time appeared to be isolated events, and whether the idea of the first triumvirate resulting from some 'historical interview' at some definite time and place and wrapped in deepest mystery, corresponds with reality.

If—instead of choosing one from among the different versions placed at our disposal by ancient historians and presuming it alone to be correct while rejecting the others as erroneous or incomplete—we were to draw our information from all the sources, neglecting none, however feeble or uncertain, the situation might appear in the end a little less obscure; and the first fact to emerge would be that the famous agreement of 'the three', far from being born during a single confidential conference, was the result of several interviews and a certain number of preliminary measures.

In particular it appears that during the first stage relations were established between Caesar and Pompey, and that Crassus was not approached until later. Actually, we notice that Caesar did not call upon Crassus when he was taking all possible steps to ensure his success at the elections, but that it was Luccius who provided the funds for financing his campaign. If Crassus had been interested in an enterprise which aimed at making Caesar consul it is hard to see why, in order to cover his expenses, Caesar should have had recourse to the purse of a third party, instead of delving into that of Crassus, which was so eminently suited for the purpose. The initial agreement therefore must have been made between Caesar and Pompey, and with a clearly defined object: Pompey undertook to support Caesar's candidacy, and Caesar promised, once elected consul, to have a series of legislative measures carried out for Pompey's benefit.

This agreement must have seemed insufficient to Caesar. If, on this occasion, the money of Luccius had provided him with the means of paying his electors, in the future he might still need the wealth of Crassus and his contacts in the world of high finance. As long, however, as Crassus remained on bad terms with Pompey there was no hope of coming to an understanding with him. It was first of all necessary to effect a reconciliation between the two antagonists. That is what Caesar set out to do next. This second negotiation was likewise crowned with success. Crassus allowed himself to be persuaded that it would be in his interest to wipe out old scores and to extend the hand of friendship to Pompey. The third stage followed:

a meeting of the three men with a view to establishing the advantages which each of them proposed to gain from this understanding. Was this the famous interview which led to the birth of the triumvirate? We do not think so. Certainly an understanding was now reached between the future 'triumvirs', but it only had a transitory character and was at present limited in range. In this connection it is worth noticing an approach that Balbus, acting in Caesar's name, made to Cicero. The new consul's confidential adviser went to the house of the illustrious advocate to make him a very concrete offer: Caesar hoped that Cicero would agree to take a place beside Crassus and Pompey in a sort of governmental directory which he proposed to set up. Cicero refused. The fact remains, however, that Caesar made this offer. It proves that at the time when he invited Cicero to participate in the affairs of the State, the so-called triumvirate was still only a provisional formula. Had Cicero accepted, it could easily have given place to a 'quatuorvirate', which certainly would have made a radical difference to the shape of future events.

We also notice that this proposal was made to Cicero about December 15, or, in other words, some five months after Caesar's election to the consulship and almost on the eve of his entry into office. It must therefore be concluded that our 'triumvirate' did not definitely take on its character of a 'government of three' until after this date. This being so we cannot help asking why Caesar waited so long before sending Balbus to Cicero. Nothing had occurred in the interval to justify a change in the latter's attitude to Caesar or vice-versa. Where are we to seek the reasons for this step, inspired without a doubt by the most elementary common sense? Should we not see in the time which elapsed before it was taken a proof that it was independent of the pre-electoral agreement intended to help his campaign, and that it was one of a number of measures he planned when he was about to enter upon his duties with a view to forming a 'committee of direction' over which he would probably preside and which would enable him to realize at last that political unanimity of which the absence still continued so greatly to endanger the future of the Roman Republic? Pompey would bring the support of his partisans, Crassus that of high finance, Cicero that of the Senate. Then there would be no more obstacles, no more civil strife, no more rivalries! . . . Pompey accepted, Crassus likewise. Cicero stupidly refused. Thus it was that instead of a 'government of four', Rome finally had a 'government of three' and . . . all that followed.

## A Consul Enters upon his Career

IT is a winter's day at dawn. Caesar has just returned to his vast and sumptuous dwelling after consulting the auspices at the Capitol. In a few moments he is going to don once more the *praetexta* toga. He has grown used to it again since the day long past when as a frail adolescent he laid it aside during the solemn ceremony in his modest home in the Subura. A quarter of a century has passed. The delicate grace of the stripling has vanished, giving place to characteristics of a different order. The years have slowly but inexorably made their mark upon the tender countenance. The brows have contracted and now cast a shadow of mistrust over the once clear and open gaze. The lips have become thinner and the bitter line which they have formed is all that betrays the sum of disappointments, rancours, and hatreds he has accumulated on his way. The hollow of the cheeks gives an austere severity to the once smooth profile and has banished the languid smile from his features ; deprived of its crown of curly hair, the forehead is proud and arrogant and offers a bold challenge to man and destiny. The white toga, with its purple border, falls loosely from his shoulders. With a sure gesture he arranges its folds and orders the doors to be opened to the friends, clients, and all the faithful followers who have come to accompany him on his way to the sanctuary where his curule chair awaits him.

Two processions, coming from two different parts of the city, were making their way towards the temple of Jupiter Capitoline on that morning of January 1, 59 : one Caesar's, the other that of his colleague Bibulus. Once more fate had united them. Together they entered the temple, they proceeded to the sacrifice of the bulls consecrated to Jupiter by their predecessors in office and promised to sacrifice others for the following year. Then they went to the Senate to preside over a session specially devoted to fixing the dates for the religious holidays of the year. On that day the law accorded the right to preside to whichever of the two consuls had the fasces during the first month : either the elder, or the first to be elected. In view

of the latter condition Caesar was able to assume the presidency of the Senate from the day he took office, but he managed to find a clever expedient so that his colleague should not feel slighted. As he had obtained the fasces for January, Bibulus would normally be deprived all through the month of those solemn attributes to which his office entitled him ; but Caesar re-established an ancient custom, long fallen into disuse, by which the right to have lictors was made permanent. Thus at the beginning of the year Bibulus was able to go about Rome accompanied by his apparitor and twelve lictors while waiting for the first of February, when the monthly rotation of consular duties would bring him to the head of the Republic. This also worked out to Caesar's advantage, because it entitled him to display the visible insignia of consular power during his 'idle' months. As a matter of fact, he was soon able to make excellent use of this prerogative.

After this first session, which was purely a matter of form, the Senate reassembled under Caesar's presidency. He started off with an act of great wisdom, in which Appian chooses to see proof of notorious bad faith.

'Deeply versed in the art of hypocrisy,' he writes, 'Caesar delivered a speech in the Senate purporting to establish harmony between Bibulus and himself by depicting the evils which their dissension might cause.'

According to Appian, his words had the effect of 'reassuring Bibulus', of 'removing from him all precaution and mistrust'; and, when he said Bibulus it goes without saying that Appian meant the whole party which he represented.

In reality, this appeasement was to prepare the ground for a rather bold scheme. Caesar wanted the Senate to adopt a law calling for the free distribution of certain public lands. This was his celebrated agrarian law. It is considered as one of the most important acts of his consulship and is thus entitled to close examination.<sup>100</sup>

First of all, it is important to remove a certain misunderstanding which tends to accentuate the social—some might even say socialistic or revolutionary—implications of this act.

To be sure, as far as the aristocratic party was concerned, the very term of *agrarian law* was a bogey which aroused grim memories. For more than four centuries it had been the war-cry of their class enemies. But, since the end of the tragic adventure of Spurius Cassius in the year 486 B.C., none but the people's tribunes had taken it up ;

as for the consuls, they made it their duty to oppose it as energetically as possible. And now, here was one of them openly promoting a fatal measure of this kind and trying to force it upon the Republic !

Yet, it could not have come as a surprise to anyone. Even before he assumed office Caesar had made known the bill which he intended to submit to the Senate, and this bill was obviously part of the electoral bargain struck with Pompey. That fact stands out as clearly as possible if we examine the main features of Caesar's project.

Although in its general lines it resembled the *rogatio* of Rullus, we notice at once that everything which might have seemed prejudicial to Pompey's interests had been eliminated from it. The essential aim of the law was to provide land for Pompey's veterans ; in other words to give practical effect to the promises he had made to his soldiers. We know that up to now the Senate had systematically opposed it and we have seen that this was the principal reason which led Pompey to come to an understanding with Caesar. Now the consul was fulfilling the promise made by the candidate.

The bill which Caesar read before the Senate can be summed up as follows :

It was proposed to distribute all the unoccupied lands belonging to the State, except for the Campagna which could not be touched on account of its great fertility.

The land should be divided into equal lots and be given to poor citizens who must each be the father of at least three children.

If the land provided for this distribution was not enough, more should be acquired from private owners. ' There were considerable sums in the public treasury,' Caesar said, ' which came from the booty taken by Pompey or from the rates and taxes imposed in the past ; this money, earned by the citizens at the risk of their lives, ought to be spent for their benefit.'

A commission of twenty members was to be responsible for the application of the law. Caesar excluded himself by declaring that he ' did not want his proposal to appear to be inspired by personal interest ', and that he ' contented himself with being its author and promoter '.

In order to reassure the landowners, the law specified that there would be no compulsory expropriations and that, in case of sale, private lands would be valued according to the latest entry on the register of the census, and not according to the commissioners' assessment.

After reading his draft Caesar proceeded to call the senators by name, 'asking each one', writes Dion Cassius, 'if he wished to revise anything, promising to modify it or even to cancel it if it did not fully satisfy them'.

Caesar's attitude, at once so dignified and so deferential, seems to have disconcerted the senators. Obviously they had been prepared for something else and they must have been distinctly embarrassed on hearing, in the place of the categorical and arrogant ultimatum they were expecting, an invitation to help elaborate the new law in a spirit of mutual confidence and understanding. They were well aware, however, that in accepting Caesar's proposition they would be working with their own hands to consolidate his power and to increase the prestige which he already enjoyed with the people, since, even taking into account all the amendments made by the Senate, once the law was voted it would still be Caesar who reaped all the advantages and earned the gratitude of those who were to benefit by it. This was what they could not accept. Hence the strange tactics which the senators adopted on this occasion. They did not oppose Caesar's bill, but they did not commit themselves, either. 'In any case, they promised to proceed to a preliminary examination of his proposition,' reports the historian above quoted, 'but they did nothing about it. It was a series of endless delays and adjournments, under cover of the most trivial excuses.'

This pernicious 'sabotage' was very cleverly conducted and its organizers acted with such punctilious decorum that it was impossible for Caesar to catch them out in their ill-will. But the day came when Cato, by a rather abrupt and tactless intervention ('He had neither received from nature nor acquired by effort the gift of persuasion', remarks Dion Cassius in this connection) spoilt everything. In the course of a session in which the question of the agrarian law was raised once more, probably at the request of its author, he declared that 'Broadly speaking, people ought to content themselves with the constitution of the Republic as it stood, and that nothing should be attempted beyond that'.

Thereupon Caesar exploded. All at once this man, ordinarily so controlled, gave free rein to his fury. He ordered the lictors to seize Cato and to take him to prison there and then.<sup>101</sup> This time Cato—the violent, the impulsive Cato—did not protest and allowed himself to be led away without offering the slightest resistance. But (and this was a result Caesar had not expected) a great number of his



colleagues rose spontaneously and followed him. In vain the consul tried to hold them back, reminding them that the session was still in progress and that they could not retire before it was over. The protesting senators ignored his exhortations, went in a body towards the exit and one of them, Catiline's conqueror, M. Petreius, before crossing the threshold of the *curia*, disdainfully threw out at Caesar by way of farewell: 'I would rather be in prison with Cato than here with thee.'

Caesar understood the lesson and hastened to cancel his order. The guards released Cato and the senators returned. They found Caesar waiting for them, motionless in his presidential seat. The session continued and he forthwith addressed this brief but significant speech to the assembly:

'I had made you the judges and final arbiters of this law so that if any of its provisions did not please you it would not be brought before the *comitia*; but since you have not chosen to proceed to a preliminary debate, the people alone shall decide.'

Having said this he closed the session and sent the assembly away.

The days passed and the Senate was not called. It became increasingly evident that Caesar intended to ignore that august body and to present his law directly to the *comitia*. The senators, unable to tolerate such an attack upon their prerogatives, tried to organize resistance. They were for the moment reduced to meeting privately at the house of Bibulus, who was quite elated at becoming—as he thought, at any rate—the soul of the senatorial opposition. These councils resulted in the resolution to oppose Caesar's project by every possible means and Bibulus was given the perilous honour of intervening in person at the voting of the *comitia*. The senators knew perfectly well that their undertaking was practically bound to fail, but, according to Dion Cassius, 'they thought it better that Bibulus should succumb in this struggle than that they should deserve the reproach of negligence'.

It was doubtless when he found out about this decision of the senatorial party that Caesar, in order to prove his peaceful intentions and his constant desire to reach an agreement, considered it wise to make a last attempt at conciliation, of which Appian has reported the details for us.

During a preliminary gathering at which Bibulus was present, he publicly questioned him as to the attitude he intended to take towards the agrarian law. Bibulus merely replied that 'as long as he was

consul he would not put up with any innovation'. Here is Appian's account of the dialogue which followed :

Caesar had recourse to entreaties in order to overcome the resistance of Bibulus, and he asked the people present to join their prayers with his.

'You will get the law,' he said, 'if Bibulus consents.'

Bibulus replied loudly, 'You will not get it this year, even if you all want it.' With these words he withdrew.

That was enough for Caesar. Bibulus had artlessly fallen into the trap. By his own doing, he had made his intransigence clear to all the people, while Caesar would be given credit for the conciliatory attitude he had adopted from the beginning of his campaign.

Then came the second phase : he organized, still in the open Forum, a colloquy in which Pompey and Crassus took part in the presence of a sufficiently large crowd. Both were invited to voice their opinion about the law. We do not know what Crassus said. Perhaps he said nothing at all. But the speech which Pompey did not fail to make on this occasion is known to us. 'Romans,' he declared, 'I am not the only one who approves of this law. The whole Senate approved of it on the day when it ordered a distribution of lands, not only for my companions in arms, but also for the soldiers who fought with Metellus. This distribution was put off at the time because the public treasury was not rich, but to-day, thanks to me, it is full. I therefore think it just that this promise should be kept.'

'After these words,' adds Dion Cassius, 'he went through the provisions of the law one by one and approved them all, to the great satisfaction of the people.'

Caesar took this opportunity to ask Pompey the question which Plutarch quotes thus : 'Well ! If anyone attacks my laws with violence, will you come and uphold them before the people ?' At the same time he addressed the crowd gathered round them, asking the people to plead for Pompey's support, which they promptly did. Thereupon Pompey, 'proud that both the consul and the people should invoke his aid although he held no office', cried out rather theatrically : 'If anyone dared to draw the sword, I would take up the shield !' Crassus, who seems to have played but a secondary rôle during this scene, confined himself to applauding Pompey's words.<sup>102</sup>

'After that,' Dion Cassius remarks, 'those who had not been in

favour of the law showed themselves ready to adopt it, since it was supported by men who enjoyed public esteem and whom they regarded as Caesar's enemies, for their reconciliation was not yet known.'

Bibulus meant to have the last word. He made it known that three tribunes of the people—Cn. Domitius Calvinus, Q. Ancharius, and C. Fannius—had offered him their support, intending to oppose the law by *intercessio*. In reply, Caesar gave orders to begin preparations for the meeting of the *comitia*.

Bibulus did not want to admit defeat. He announced that every day until the end of the year he was going to consult the auspices, which meant that during all this time the people could not legally be convened. Without attaching the slightest importance to this, Caesar irrevocably fixed the date on which the popular assembly was to be held.

On the appointed day, employing his usual tactics in preparation for any 'shock action' that he might find necessary, Caesar filled the vicinity of the Forum with a sufficient number of 'onlookers' armed with daggers. At sunrise he took his position at the top of the steps of the temple of the Dioscuri, ready to deliver his oration before the people who surged round the building.

Hardly had he begun to speak when a solemn procession made its appearance. At its head marched Bibulus, duly preceded by the lictors to whom his rank entitled him. He was accompanied by the *consulares* L. Lucullus,<sup>103</sup> Q. Metellus Celer, and L. Gellius, and by the three recent deserters from the College of Tribunes. Then followed a motley crowd of clients and partisans. 'Covering units' under the command of a young patrician called Curio, just starting his career, lined their path.

Bibulus had hardly begun to mount the steps when he was seized and sent rolling down. Someone threw a basket of refuse on his head. The people rushed upon the lictors and broke the fasces. Stones rained down upon his partisans, and many of them were wounded. As for Bibulus himself, he gave proof of real courage in these alarming circumstances. 'He bared his chest,' writes Appian, 'and, calling aloud to Caesar's satellites to come and stab him with their daggers, he said, "If I cannot persuade Caesar to be just, I can at least render him odious by laying the crime of my assassination to his charge."' Some friends seized him and, heedless of his protestations, dragged him towards the temple of Jupiter Stator, where

he would be safe from violence. At this point Cato arrived. He surged forward, braving everything and everybody, succeeded in forcing his way to the orators' tribune and began to address the people. He was dragged off and brutally thrown to the ground. He got up again, escaped from his pursuers, slipped through a side door, came back on to the scene and once more tried to take possession of the tribune. Again the blows rained down on him and this time they were more effective. In a pitiful state, 'barely able to walk, he went off cursing such citizens', so Plutarch affirms.

Caesar, with imperturbable calm, awaited the end of the fight. Then he proceeded to the voting. The law was immediately adopted, without any further hindrance to interfere with the people's decision. After that he gave notice to the Senate to assemble next day.

The session was brief. The senators were informed that by a special clause of the law which had just been voted they were obliged to swear that they would neither try to oppose its application, nor encourage any attempt to do so. A mournful silence followed this declaration. Bibulus had expected that they would take this opportunity to protest against the shameful treatment inflicted upon him the day before and to condemn the violence of which he had been the victim, but he was disappointed. No one seemed to remember it. Deeply offended and full of bitterness he made up his mind to shut himself up in his house and not to come out till the end of the year, which legally would make null and void all future actions of his fellow consul.<sup>104</sup>

The senators were not unanimous when confronted with the obligation of swearing to observe and respect Caesar's law. Many declared that they would not take the required oath and that they continued to disapprove of the new measures. Metellus Celer and Cato distinguished themselves by a particularly intransigent attitude.

Caesar was not at a loss to find a way of bringing these dilatory tactics to an end. He made the *comitia* vote a law which inflicted the death sentence on whoever refused to take the oath . . . and the senators swore without waiting for the time allowed them to expire. Cato did as all the others. It seems that he yielded to the entreaties of his wife and sister, who were joined by many friends. 'But the one whose advice succeeded best in persuading him to accept the oath', writes Plutarch, 'was the orator Cicero.' The latter, who had judged it more prudent to retire to the country during this ticklish period, sent him a letter saying 'that he was not quite sure it was

right to be alone in resisting what had been generally decided : but to expose oneself to danger by trying to change the impossible and refusing to accept the accomplished fact, that was indeed stupidity and madness'. The epistle ended with this flattering statement to which its recipient could not have remained insensible : 'If Cato does not need Rome, Rome needs Cato.'

The candidates for public appointments were also required to swear that they would respect the new law, otherwise they were not allowed to apply for office. They all obeyed in like manner, except a certain Laterensis, who gave up his candidacy for the tribuneship in order to avoid taking the oath. This earned him the consolation of the warm congratulations of Cicero, if nothing else.

Thus, by a simple and expeditious procedure, any attempt at opposition was silenced at the very outset and the new measures could be put into effect without the least difficulty. Caesar was not content, however, with the provisions of the law just adopted. As soon as the twenty commissioners who were to carry it out had been appointed, he submitted to the *comitia* an amendment extending its clauses to the fertile Campagna, which had been spared in the original draft. Once more the people's assembly gave Caesar what he wanted and accepted his new project without discussion. Thus a second agrarian law was added to the first. Pompey's veterans might well feel satisfied ; the promise which their chief had made so long ago was to be kept. Moreover he was going in person and without delay to superintend the distribution of the land.<sup>105</sup>

*Matrimonial Transactions*

**B**EFORE leaving Rome, Pompey considered it necessary to get married. A few days later, Caesar followed his example.

The former was nearly fifty, the latter past forty. Both had been married twice. Each had been obliged to repudiate his second wife. We have seen the circumstances which prompted Caesar to separate from his. Pompey had scarcely been more fortunate. While he was waging war in the East, Mucia deceived him in Rome to an extent that even this man, of mild disposition and ordinarily little prone to hasty reactions, ended by finding excessive. Upon his return judging that her conduct might cast a shadow over the glory he had newly won as the conqueror of Mithridates, he decided to put her away. They had lived together for twenty years, which in Rome at that period passed as a rare example of matrimonial constancy.

When, soon after that, he saw Cato so vigorously opposing his demands in the Senate, he thought it would be of great advantage to form a connection with him, hoping thus to benefit by his influence with the majority in that assembly. Accordingly he asked Cato for his two daughters in marriage: one for himself and the other for his son Sextus. Cato refused point blank and declared to the man who had been sent to open the negotiations: 'Go and tell Pompey that it is not by women that Cato is caught.'

Pompey considered the matter closed and did not insist. Then, carried along in the wake of his agreements with Caesar, he reasoned in the same way and made a similar demand of him, asking for the hand of his daughter, Julia. True, his new associate had been among the recent lovers of his former wife, and rumour accused him of having gloried publicly in this fact during Pompey's absence.<sup>108</sup> No matter! Politics have their reasons that the heart does not know.

Commenting on this, Plutarch observes that 'Cato made a serious mistake in not accepting the alliance: he thus allowed Pompey to turn towards Caesar and to contract a marriage which, in uniting the power of Pompey with that of Caesar, nearly overthrew the Roman Empire and destroyed the Republic'.

According to Cicero also, the initiative came from Pompey. 'It was he who wanted to become Caesar's son-in-law', he writes to Atticus, and in another letter, which must have been written between the 2nd and the 15th of May, he adds in pessimistic vein to the same correspondent: 'Everything is to be feared. Evidently he [Pompey] is aiming at tyranny. How else explain this sudden marriage, this distribution of the lands of the Campagna, this money scattered in profusion?'

Appian, on the contrary, attributes the idea of the marriage to Caesar, who wanted to attach Pompey to himself by the bonds of kinship, 'for fear lest, in spite of being his friend, he should become jealous of his wealth and exalted position'. Who is right, and which is the true version? After so many centuries have passed it is impossible to give an opinion on an affair of so strictly personal a character (notwithstanding the serious political consequences which resulted from it), and on which none of the interested parties has troubled to throw the slightest ray of light. All one can say is that from whichever side the initiative came, the union corresponded perfectly with the interests of both. Indeed, it was only the first in a series of transactions. Caesar's marriage followed close upon it. That likewise was an act of wise foresight on his part. It was agreed between him and Pompey that the latter's confidential agent, Aulus Gabinius, should be made consul the following year. It was therefore very much in Caesar's interest to give him as colleague a man from his own entourage and entirely devoted to his cause. Thus the perfect balance of the prevailing forces would be maintained. His choice fell upon the worthy senator L. Calpurnius Piso, a rather colourless personage who, however, was very highly thought of in political circles; and in order to attach him more closely to himself he married his daughter Calpurnia. Caesar's calculations proved to be right: he found in his father-in-law a docile and obedient instrument, ready to serve him with the utmost zeal. As for the two brides elect—both girls were already betrothed, so without more ado both their fiancés were dismissed and they were presented with the accomplished fact.<sup>107</sup> Once more Cato cried out in horror, exclaiming 'that they were bargaining for power and the Republic with marriages'. Caesar let him say what he liked and went out of his way to make his son-in-law the object of his special consideration.

'After this new alliance', writes Suetonius, 'it was Pompey whom he addressed first in the Senate, and not Crassus, as he had done before.'

## Assignment of Provinces

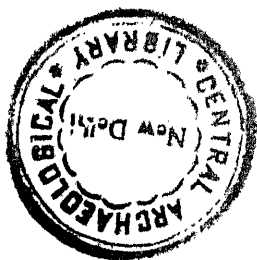
HAVING looked after the interests of Pompey in the matter of the agrarian law, Caesar now attended to his own. The trick which the senators had played in conferring on him a province for his proconsulship from which he would gain no advantage whatever, could not be tolerated. The tribune P. Vatinius, for a sum which unfortunately cannot be gauged, undertook to arrange matters : he proposed to the *comitia* to annul the Senate's decision allocating the departments of ' rivers and forests ' to the consuls, and to assign to Caesar, by plebiscite, the government of Cisalpine Gaul and of Illyricum for a period of five years, beginning at the expiration of his consulship, that is to say on January 1, 58. Moreover, he was to have three legions placed at his disposal, and the right to choose his own legates.<sup>108</sup> The *comitia* unquestioningly granted all that was asked of them. Caesar was thus fully satisfied. The clumsy attempt of the Senate to humiliate him had actually led to an increase of his power, and he would now be more formidable than ever to his enemies, for the road of military conquest was opened to him, with Illyricum as his point of departure.

It will be readily agreed that if Vatinius decided to join Illyricum with Cisalpine Gaul in his *rogatio*, it was because that was Caesar's desire. Furthermore, if Caesar wanted to secure his means of action for the exceptional span of five years he must have been contemplating something which would take considerably longer to achieve than the usual term of proconsular office. Clearly this must have been a military enterprise orientated either towards the east or the west. In assigning to Metellus Celer by special appointment the command of Transalpine Gaul, the Senate had put the control of military operations in that region in his charge. So it was where the road lay open, eastwards, that Caesar was proposing to start his campaign—when an unexpected event completely changed his plans.

Instead of leaving to take up his new duties, the ex-consul Metellus Celer remained on in Rome, for he was in poor health and steadily getting worse. His voice had been heard in opposition to the oath



concerning the agrarian law. That was probably his last public appearance. A few days later, towards the middle of April, it was learnt that he had died. Immediately Caesar had the idea of appropriating the governorship which had thus become vacant. Of course he did not show his hand and kept his covetousness to himself, but he set his father-in-law to work in the Senate and his son-in-law in the *comitia*. Both must have done well, particularly the former, since finally, in spite of the resistance and the 'lamentations' of the opposing party, the Senate on its own initiative decided to offer Caesar Transalpine Gaul, at the same time adding a fourth legion to the three already granted. Thus, this assembly which up till now had been, resolutely hostile to all Caesar's attempts to forge his way to power and which had never ceased to combat every move likely to contribute to the increase of his authority, was now consenting to fling the gates of his future wide open for him. His wild transports of joy on learning of the Senate's decision prove better than anything the importance he attached to it. He even went so far as to boast publicly—'in the presence of numerous senators', according to Suetonius—that henceforth he would be able to 'walk over all their heads' [*sic* !]. A certain senator, angered by this insolence and hoping to wound him in his turn by an allusion to his homosexuality, remarked that 'that would not be easy for a woman'. With great self-control and still on a note of raillery, Caesar merely replied 'that even Semiramis had reigned in Syria and that the Amazons had formerly ruled over a great part of Asia'.



## The Opposition

AN opposition to Caesar was beginning to take shape, however, and Bibulus became its spokesman. Shut up in his house he conducted a campaign of edicts. Every day he composed new ones and every day, thanks to his partisans' efforts, they were plastered on the walls all over the city. Presented in the guise of official decrees, they were no better than vulgar pamphlets denouncing in a vehement and coarse style Caesar's debaucheries and his 'scandalous' conduct in the far distant time of his youth at the court of Nicomedes. We can get an idea of these literary efforts from a specimen reported by Suetonius: 'Formerly he [Caesar] was in love with a king, now he is in love with kingship.' Caesar's enemies found this very witty and appeared to be delighted. According to Cicero—who, once the critical phase of the vote on the agrarian law was past, had come back to Rome—the crowds pressing round the placards of this 'new Archilochus' were such that it became impossible to cross the streets where they had been put up. 'The enthusiasm and fervour of the people have raised Bibulus to the skies', he writes to his friend Atticus on this subject. 'They do nothing but copy and read his edicts.' And he adds subtly: 'Bibulus has marched to glory by quite a new road. To-day, nothing is more popular than to detest popular men.'

Emboldened, Bibulus announced that he objected to the convocation of the *comitia* which were to assemble as usual in July, and, claiming to use his consular authority, he put them off till October.<sup>109</sup> This was childish, since it was obvious that this delay would not alter the situation in any way. It was merely a matter of annoying Caesar and his candidates, whose election would thus be delayed for three months. Caesar wanted to exploit the discontent which this measure had aroused, and he tried to incite the crowd to make a hostile demonstration outside his colleague's house. He did not succeed.<sup>110</sup> This could be taken as a sign that Caesar's popularity had slightly decreased in democratic circles where, in addition to disappointment over the too narrow spirit of the agrarian law, there was a growing

feeling of uneasiness and mistrust caused by rumours concerning the mysterious transactions of the 'triumvirs'.

A characteristic scene occurred during the games held in honour of Apollo on the eve of the Ides of July. As usual, part of the celebrations took the form of a theatrical performance. It is quite likely that this happened on Caesar's anniversary, because the games lasted from the 6th to the 13th of July and the dramatic programme came at the end. At any rate, as consul he was obliged to honour the performance with his presence. When he made his entry after the ceremonial ritual there was an icy silence. But when, immediately after him, the young Curio, who was beginning to attract notice as one of the organizers of Caesar's opposition, entered, a thunder of applause rang out to greet him.

The play started. The title of the tragedy has not come down to us, nor the name of its author, but we do know that one of the principal actors was called Dephilos. Whether he was simply an instrument in the hands of the enemies of Caesar and Pompey or whether he was prompted by his personal feelings is not recorded, but he gave a rather significant performance which produced a startling effect. His part contained some passages which were singularly appropriate and he took pains to give them special emphasis. The first line ran thus :

'It is our misery which has made thee great . . .'

As Dephilos pronounced these words he turned ostentatiously and pointed with his outstretched arm towards Caesar's box. The public showed their approval, demanding to hear the line again. Dephilos repeated it 'without hesitating and still with the same accusing gesture', Cicero, who seems to have been an eye-witness of the scene, asserts that he was forced 'to say it a thousand times over'. A burst of applause greeted the phrase :

'This very rank of which thou art so vain  
Will one day cost thee tears . . .'

and a great murmur interspersed with threatening shouts accompanied this line :

'If nothing restrains thee, neither law nor morals . . .'

'And so it went on to the end', says Cicero, who has carefully reported the incident in minute detail and with evident satisfaction.

## THE OPPOSITION

'Caesar was outraged by it,' he adds, 'and they say he hurried to inform Pompey.' As a matter of fact, according to Cicero, this attack was directed mainly against Pompey. Valerius Maximus goes so far as to claim that Dephilos spoke his lines 'with his hands stretched out towards the great Pompey', forgetting that the latter was away from Rome.<sup>111</sup> Now this gesture, if he really made it, could have been directed only at someone who was present—that is to say, at Caesar. In the circumstances it was only too natural that the absent Pompey should have been associated with the present Caesar in the mind of the actor, and still more strongly in the mind of the audience. And that was how Caesar himself understood it, as he hastened to break the news to his son-in-law.

A strange adventure of which the true background has never been explained should be placed in about the same period. We read in Suetonius: 'Against all his enemies he [Caesar] hired an informer who consented for money to declare that some among them had asked him to kill Pompey.'

We already know this person. It is the same Vettius who, some three years before, had approached the *quaesitor* Novius claiming that he could produce proof of Caesar's complicity with Catiline. It is difficult to believe that in so delicate a matter, where he risked so much, Caesar would have employed a man who had tried to cause his ruin and whose activities could not inspire the slightest confidence. Most of the documents and evidence at our disposal tend rather to place the responsibility on the leaders of the senatorial opposition, particularly on Lucullus, who had what he considered legitimate grounds for bearing a grudge against Pompey. We must not forget, moreover, that Vettius had been among the confidential agents of Cicero, who might very well have served as intermediary between his former assistant and the little party of Lucullus. It need scarcely be said that in Rome assassination was quite a common method of getting rid of a political opponent and a man such as Vettius was eminently cut out for the task. Only, this professional informer did not set a limit to his betrayals and, probably judging that this was a good chance of tapping two sources of wealth simultaneously, he sought out Pompey, who had just returned to Rome, to warn him of the danger which threatened him.

Informed of what was on foot, Caesar, in agreement with his associate, decided that a cleverly faked pseudo-plot would be of service to both of them. It would give them a legitimate reason for

self-defence and would justify certain severe measures while helping them to regain the sympathies of the public, which were slightly shaken as a result of recent events. Vettius was accordingly left to continue his activities, as if the plot were really going to be carried out. He was able to interest several ambitious young men in his scheme, among them the turbulent Curio who, since the ovation which had greeted him at the games of Apollo, gaily imagined himself to be the leader of Roman youth, and Cato's nephew, M. Junius Brutus, a lanky fellow, grimly aloof and very much under his uncle's influence at that time. In this way the affair perceptibly gained in scope and threatened to surpass its original limits: the 'pseudo-plot' might well turn into a regular conspiracy and end up in an all too real attempt upon the lives of Caesar and Pompey by these fanatical young 'liberators'. It was therefore time to put a stop to it. We know how Vettius was arrested, dagger in hand, in the Forum; how, when ordered to reveal the names of his accomplices, he denounced Curio and Brutus; how the next day he contradicted himself and named the true instigators of the plot: Lucullus, Cicero, and the praetor Domitius. We know also how, on Caesar's orders, Vettius was strangled the night after his disclosures. Thus a veil was thrown for ever over this mysterious business. Whatever its origin, one fact remains: it is a clear indication of the undercurrent of hostility towards Caesar and Pompey which existed among the young patricians of that period.<sup>112</sup>

## The Julian Laws

AFTER describing the storm which accompanied the vote on Caesar's agrarian law, Dion Cassius adds: 'Then he established many laws.' He does not tell us which, however, and contents himself with the brief statement, 'They are very numerous'. We know only a few of them. Perhaps Dion Cassius, in expressing himself as he did, meant to comprise in one category all the laws which Caesar promulgated in the course of his subsequent consulships. At any rate, the number of those for the year 59 of which we find traces in history is not considerable.<sup>113</sup> Probably the foremost is the law which decreed the reduction of the licence fees payable by tax-collectors. This was no doubt a way of rewarding Crassus for his co-operation in Caesar's project. The *publicani* had raised this demand on several occasions, but without any result. Their last failure had been in 61, and was due to Cato, who had energetically opposed any threat to the revenue of the State. In order to avoid the risk of an open and final rupture with the capitalist elements, the Senate made it known that it was 'adjourning its decision'. The 'adjournment' was prolonged and there seemed no prospect of its coming to an end. Caesar broke with this policy of procrastination and adopted a simple and effective method. He addressed himself directly to the *comitia* and obtained from them the reduction by a third of the balance which the tax collectors owed the State treasury. This measure was definitely against the interests of the Republic, which thereby lost considerable sums that would have replenished its coffers in the near future. On the other hand, it was of great advantage to the *publicani*, 'whose hopes were far surpassed by this reduction', remarks Appian, adding that they 'extolled Caesar like a god' after he had made them this present. To attenuate to some extent the effect which this decision had not failed to produce on the people, Caesar thought well to address the happy beneficiaries of his law in a public speech, urging them 'to avoid bidding too high in the public tender for future tax collection assignments'.

Next move: as the Senate had systematically refused to recognize

all the legislative measures and administrative acts carried out by Pompey in Asia, Caesar had these ratified *en bloc* at one stroke, thanks to the usual method—a plebiscite of the *comitia*. ‘No one dared to resist’, notes Dion Cassius on this occasion.

These legislative measures were designed to give satisfaction to Caesar’s two associates. The *lex Julia de provincia ordinandis* and the law *de pecuniis repetundis* which followed it ostensibly served the general interest.<sup>114</sup> The first of these laws guaranteed the inhabitants of the provinces against arbitrary action on the part of their governors. It fixed the allocations due to the latter and it made the *civitatis liberae* independent of them. When their appointment came to an end, a complete account of their administration had to be submitted within a month to the treasury in Rome and copies posted up in the two principal towns of the province. They retained the right to ask their subjects for a *coronarius* (originally a golden crown sent by the provinces to celebrate the triumph of a victorious general, and afterwards changed to a sum of money), but from now on it was first necessary that the requested triumphal honours should have been actually accorded them. A special provision of the law forbade the governor of a province to leave it or to remove any troops without the authorization of the Senate and the *comitia*. This was a particularly serious blow to proconsular authority. We shall soon see in what measure Caesar himself conformed to it.

The *lex Julia de repetundis* was a continuation and complement of the first law. Its range was less wide, but its provisions were aimed more directly at the special abuses it attacked. Its object was to remedy a hitherto incurable disease inherent in the Roman administration. It was not the first time that an attempt had been made to stamp out the corruption with which it was riddled. On several occasions the law-makers of the Republic had been forced to use the weapon of legislation against corrupt magistrates, but the latter had always proved invulnerable. They escaped with at the worst a few slight scratches which quickly healed and did not in the least prevent them from persevering in the way they had chosen—their rapacity greater than ever. The last law had been made by Sulla. It came twenty-five years after a similar one presented by the tribune Glaukia. Now after another twenty-five years Caesar put through his own. ‘And its promoter’, writes the indignant Drumann, ‘was the very same man who was going to corrupt with Gallic gold all the electoral operations in Rome during the years that were to follow!’ Nothing

## THE JULIAN LAWS

could be truer, but the historian was forgetting the essential rule which Caesar never failed to observe in his political conduct : laws are made to be carried out by others. If the promoter of the *lex Julia de repetundis* had not the slightest intention of observing it personally, he was determined at least to provide himself with adequate means for putting down such abuses on the part of his enemies, both now and in the future. It was for this reason, no doubt, that the application of the law was to extend over as wide a field as possible. It embraced all cases of extortion, whether they occurred in Rome or outside Italy. Magistrates, legates, and all in authority were within its reach, and it did not spare their subordinates and assistants. They were all considered as extortioners and punished as such if they had received money:

1. For giving their opinion in the Senate, or at a public council.
2. For doing their duty, or for leaving it undone.
3. For renouncing a public charge, or for going beyond it.
4. For pronouncing a judgment, or for not pronouncing it.
5. For a condemnation, or for an acquittal.
6. For imprisoning a man, or for setting him free.
7. For accusing someone, or for not accusing him.
8. For producing evidence, or for suppressing it.
9. For adjudicating or assessing an object in dispute.
10. For declaring unfinished public works to be completed.
11. For accepting deliveries of corn for the State without testing its quality.
12. For undertaking the maintenance of public buildings without ascertaining their good condition.
13. For enlisting troops, or for disbanding them.

The law did not abolish in principle the gratuities which it was customary to offer to magistrates. It merely limited them by fixing the maximum at 10,000 sesterces per year, which, as a matter of fact, at that time was a sum not to be despised. The penalties prescribed generally took the form of fines which were added to the amount required to repay the extorted sums. Offenders could be excluded from the Senate on occasion. If the accused was unable to pay the total cost of restitution, all those who had profited by his irregularities were to be sought out and condemned conjointly.

When brought before the Senate this law was adopted without objection. Theoretically, it implied, as J. Carcopino says, 'a far-reaching political reform'.<sup>115</sup> Practically, its result was meagre enough.



## CAESAR

The evil was too deeply rooted, and legal provisions, even of the most rigorous character—even bearing the stamp of Caesar's personal will—were powerless to combat it. We only have to recall among many others the scandalous acquittal of Appius Claudius in the year 50. Nevertheless, the text of the law always kept its prestige, and fragments of it, carefully gathered together and incorporated in the Digest of Justinian, served to maintain its author's reputation as a jurist at a suitably high level.

## Balance Sheet for the First Consulship

WE have passed in review the various manifestations of Caesar's activity during the year of his consulship. It remains to draw up the balance sheet.

His accession to the highest office in the Republic had raised great hopes in some hearts and struck great terror in others. The supporters of the senatorial party had expected to see the State plunged into a condition of permanent anarchy. In their minds they had visualized scenes of carnage, devastation, and the total destruction of property, encouraged and personally directed by the highest magistrate of the city. The people, on the other hand, had hoped to see their material condition considerably improved and anticipated, if not a total remission of debts (the great ambition of every Roman plebeian), at least their substantial reduction.

Both parties were disappointed. Apart from the incidents caused by the aggressive intractability of Bibulus and Cato, nothing happened to disturb the orderly course of events in Rome during these twelve months. No revolutionary measure was taken to despoil the wealthy or to threaten their rights. No doubt some were dissatisfied and pessimistic; Cicero, for instance, predicted the downfall of the Republic and the establishment of a dictatorial régime, but these lamentations had no real effect, and at the most resulted in 'symbolic' demonstrations such as that which occurred during the games in honour of Apollo. As for Vettius, even if one does not dismiss him as a simple *agent provocateur*, it is difficult to see in the whole affair more than preliminary steps taken at a few secret gatherings of a private order and of limited significance.

It was above all the people who must have been disappointed. If Caesar had really been seeking power in order to carry out the social and economic reforms so greatly needed in the Roman Republic, vast possibilities opened before him. He scarcely made any use of them. His agrarian law, when all was said and done, only

benefited Pompey's disbanded soldiers and a certain number of speculators who hastened to lay hands on the land put up for sale. The poor gained no advantage. The few who were given a plot usually lacked the means to cultivate it. Above all, the prospect of leaving the city to which they were so strongly attached and going to labour in some remote corner of Italy did not appeal to them in the least. The problem of sustenance was still unsolved, and Caesar did nothing to tackle it. As for private debts, he did not even grant the Romans the favour the Spaniards had obtained from him the year before, and creditors still had, as in the past, the right to seize the total income of their debtors to ensure repayment. An examination of Caesar's total accomplishments as consul in the year 59 shows clearly that his first thought was to prepare for his own future. After long years of waiting and feeling his way, he saw the road opening before him. He meant to clear from it every enemy ambush and obstruction.

Then came the day of December 31 when his consular powers were to expire. According to custom, Caesar went in solemn procession to the Capitol to pronounce the ritual formula of abdication and to take the oath of 'having acted for the public good'.<sup>116</sup> His colleague Bibulus reappeared on this occasion after an absence of eight months. He had kept his word, and it was only to resign his office on the last day of the year that he had crossed the threshold of his home. He did not content himself, however, with pronouncing the sacred formula. He proposed to deliver a speech 'on the present state of the Republic'. He scarcely had time to articulate a few words. A hand struck him on the mouth and roughly checked the flow of his eloquence. It was young Clodius, who by this act of violence inaugurated his career as people's tribune, an office which he owed to the gracious influence of the ex-husband of his quondam mistress.

Since the happy outcome of his trial, the 'profaner' of the venerable abode of the Supreme Pontiff had managed to capture the good graces of its master. Caesar, who did not seem to have felt very severely towards him for having been the lover of his wife, soon realized that he could make good use of this ambitious and intelligent youth. But it was necessary to give him some official position so that he would be taken seriously. For the moment, he was not old enough to qualify for a magistracy, and his patrician origin debarred him from standing as candidate for a tribuneship. There was, however, a way of getting round this difficulty: namely, to transfer Clodius into the

plebeian class by finding someone in that social category who would adopt him. It would have been very easy to choose a suitable 'father', but at first Caesar does not seem to have been in favour of such a solution. One day, however, at the trial of C. Antonius, who was once more being required to account for his crooked dealings, Clodius overheard the counsel for the defence—who happened to be none other than Cicero—pour out abuse against the régime then in force while deploring the unhappy consequences of the conflict between Bibulus and Caesar. Our young friend hurried off to report what he had heard to Caesar, no doubt with some slight exaggerations. In any case, it was enough to overcome Caesar's scruples, and without delay the members of the College of Pontiffs were called together. They were to hear their supreme master give his consent to the adoption of Clodius by a certain P. Fonteius who, although about the same age as his future 'son', was already attached to him by rather intimate bonds. An hour later a *lex curiata de adrogatione* sanctioned the operation, and gave the beneficiary access to the coming elections.<sup>117</sup> Clodius, named tribune of the people without any difficulty, chose to inaugurate his entry into office by assaulting a high magistrate relinquishing his charge. He was soon going to find a way of distinguishing himself by exploits of another order.

## *Before the Great Departure*

THE praetor L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, whom Vettius, possibly at Caesar's instigation, had mentioned in his second 'confession', was ending his term of office at the same time as Caesar himself. According to Sallust, he was 'a man whose word could not be trusted, whose hands were stained with blood, whose feet were swift to run away', and who had 'every member of his body marked by some vice or crime'. In any case, he seems to have borne bitter malice towards Caesar, because hardly had he returned to private life when, conjointly with his colleague C. Memmius, he presented the Senate with a list of all the illegal actions and abuses of which, according to him, Caesar had been guilty during his consulship. One of the chief grievances was the non-observance of the compulsory prescriptions concerning the consultation of the auspices which, in perfect agreement with Bibulus' argument, should nullify all of Caesar's consular achievements and make him liable to judicial prosecution.

The Senate assembled to examine this report which gave rise to lively discussion. The debates lasted three days. Memmius delivered a 'very violent' speech against Caesar. He attacked his past. Quoting statements by eyewitnesses whom he named, he recalled the feast of Nicomedes at which Caesar had played so singular a rôle. The accused replied with 'no less bitterness'.<sup>118</sup> He did not choose to attend these discussions in person, judging it to be beneath his dignity. He merely drew up written answers, which were read on his behalf to the *patres*. Mention of three justificatory memoranda has come down to us. They probably correspond to the three sessions devoted to this affair. The Senate did not dare to pronounce Caesar guilty. Perhaps they were afraid that if he were summoned to appear before the judges he would call upon his partisans and so find means of inflicting a new humiliation upon them while triumphing over all the accusations levelled against him. Finally they made Memmius and Domitius understand that it would be better to abandon their case. Whether they liked it or not, they were obliged to give in.

The former managed in time to get over his resentment. It was far otherwise with the latter.

At any rate, Caesar emerged victorious from the ordeal. It was, however, easy to foresee that this first attack would be followed by others.<sup>119</sup> Too many hatreds, too many vengeance were smouldering unsatisfied. It would have been perfectly simple for Caesar to escape from any further prosecutions by going immediately to his province. But there were imperative reasons for his staying on. Numerous enemies were only waiting for his departure in order to resume their intrigues in perfect liberty. Caesar knew how to deal with this difficulty.

There was a law forbidding any accusation to be brought against a citizen absent in the service of the Republic. In order to benefit if need be from this regulation, Caesar had recourse to a method at once simple and ingenious. He left his home in the *via sacra* and established himself in a villa at the gates of Rome. Thus, from the legal point of view, he was considered as being outside the capital and could claim the *imperium*, which made him unassailable.

He had been well inspired to do this. A new accusation was being brought against him, this time involving his financial administration. We do not know exactly what Caesar was charged with on this occasion. Suetonius suggests that during his first consulship 'he robbed the Capitol', or, in other words, took from the public treasury three thousand pounds of gold and replaced them by the same weight of gilded bronze. We know also that during the whole period Caesar had continued in his course of wild prodigality at an even greater rate than before, and the story was going about Rome of a pearl he had bought for six million sesterces, as a present for Servilia. The attempted accusation failed. Unable to get at Caesar, they seized his quaestor, who was dragged to court on several charges with a view to an intermediate investigation. Immediately afterwards the tribune L. Antistius, defying the legal proscriptions, tried to bring an action against Caesar, who was obliged to call upon his supporters in the College of Tribunes. With their help he obtained an *intercessio* which brought the proceedings to an end.

Caesar's stay *extra muros* lasted three months. He used this time for organizing his party for the whole duration of his forthcoming absence. It was a particularly delicate task and of capital importance. While away from Rome it was necessary that he should be always present in the minds of the people, that the memory of him should

not merely remain indelibly stamped there, but that it should be surrounded with an ever growing halo of glory and prestige. Above all, it was important to keep a good watch not only on those enemies who would not fail to profit by his absence to intensify their underhand activities, but also on a number of friends whose loyalty might not be strong enough to withstand the test of distance. In having his father-in-law Piso elected consul, Caesar had secured an effective supporter to counterbalance the other consul Gabinius, who was the creature of Pompey. That, however, was not enough. He needed someone young and enterprising, ready for anything and free from excessive scruples, to whom he could entrust the execution of certain vengeance still waiting to be carried out. He was able to find such a man in the person of Clodius, who owed him everything and whose devotion on this account caused him no anxiety. It is not difficult to guess who was first and foremost on the list of victims: it was Cicero.

In the whole enemy camp Caesar had no cleverer or more dangerous adversary. He rightly feared Cicero's influence, his cunning and his eloquence. Once he had gone, this adroit politician would have the coast clear for his intrigues. After his refusal to participate in the supreme direction of the State as planned by Caesar in December 60, the latter had tried several times to win him over by flattering propositions. The day after the hurried *traductio ad plebem* of Clodius, as if to reassure him about his intentions, he offered him a mission in Egypt. It was a tempting offer. The prospect of a stay in Alexandria attracted Cicero greatly. He refused, nevertheless. 'What would all our good people say,' he wrote to Atticus, 'and what would history say of me in a few centuries? I fear that more than the chatter of our contemporaries.' After the *lex Vatinia* had been passed, Caesar proposed that Cicero should accompany him to his province as legate. This suggestion, while ostensibly flattering to Cicero, would have been an excellent method of keeping him far from Rome during the whole period of Caesar's absence. He did not accept. A few weeks later, Cicero was invited to replace one of the five members of the executive committee of the agrarian commission who had recently died. He refused again. After that, Caesar did not insist any more. Changing his tactics, he adopted an attitude of complete indifference, pretending to take no further interest in what became of his opponent or in what he did. This, however, was only a blind; in reality he never ceased working to

remove him once and for all from the political scene. To obtain this result he knew exactly how to exploit the hatred and spite in the heart of his young agent.

He instructed Clodius to introduce a law before the *comitia* sentencing to banishment all those who ever had, or should, put to death a citizen not condemned by the people. No name was mentioned, no individual was implicated; at first sight the law seemed to be directed against the Senate *in corpore* since, in entrusting the consuls with the task of 'watching over the safety of Rome', it had sanctioned the death of the Catilinarians. It was, however, Cicero, who had accused them in his speeches, who had had the decree made final and who had made himself personally responsible for their execution; it was therefore he who must be considered as the chief offender.

The bill was introduced during the first days of February, and Cicero appeared to be very uneasy about it. 'Going through the town night and day, he courted all the men who had any influence, whether they were friends or enemies', writes Dion Cassius on this subject. All these measures were ineffective. Then, putting his pride in his pocket he approached Caesar. The new governor of Gaul received him very courteously, and, after listening to his tale of woe, advised him to leave Rome for a while, renewing his previous offer to take him to Gaul. Cicero seemed to hesitate and promised to give his answer in a few days.

Before making up his mind he went to see Pompey, who was expecting him. Caesar had already informed him of Cicero's move. According to Dion Cassius, the two accomplices were in complete agreement in seeking the ruin of the unfortunate ex-consul. Pompey's recommendations were in every respect the opposite of Caesar's. 'He dissuaded Cicero from the idea of leaving Rome, stating bluntly that his departure would be equivalent to flight and implying that Caesar's hatred prevented him from giving wise counsel. He encouraged him to remain, to fight boldly for himself and for the Senate, and to revenge himself upon Clodius, who would never succeed as long as Cicero was in Rome to oppose him.' He even went so far as to promise him his personal support in the struggle against Clodius. Cicero listened to him, believed him, and let Caesar know that he thanked him for his advice but that he had decided to stay in Rome. This was exactly what Caesar wanted him to do and Clodius received orders to proceed to action.

Caesar wished the debates to take place in his presence. As he was



not able to enter the city, the *contio* was called outside the walls, near the Flaminian Circus. Pompey, a little embarrassed, preferred not to appear. Crassus stayed away, too. He was represented by his son whom he had just placed very advantageously on Caesar's staff. The two new consuls, however, were present. When asked to give his opinion of Cicero's conduct in the Catilinarian affair, Caesar's father-in-law merely declared that he 'did not like cruelty'. His colleague Gabinius was less reserved and vigorously condemned the execution of Catiline's companions. Then came Caesar's turn. He delivered a somewhat subtle speech and avoided taking any clear public stand. 'He condemned as illegal the measures taken in the case of Lentulus, but he disapproved of the penalty proposed in this matter.' Thus Dion Cassius sums up his argument. It was equivalent to a formal condemnation of Cicero, guilty of having acted 'illegally', and his declaration 'that such a law should not be applied against actions which belonged to the past' changed nothing. It merely served to justify that reputation for clemency and gentleness which Caesar wanted to establish for himself in popular circles.

The people gave Clodius' bill a favourable reception, and Cicero, hearing the result of the debates, wisely decided to leave Rome without delay so as to put himself beyond the reach of prosecution. He barely had time to leave the city. Scarcely had he gone when a law ordered the confiscation of his goods. His house was razed to the ground and its former site was set apart for the erection of a temple to Liberty. The man who four years earlier had been proclaimed 'Father of the Country' was banished to a distance of 3,750 stadia (about 430 miles), while a decree announced that if he were found within this radius both he and those who had received him were to be struck down without trial in the place where they were captured.<sup>120</sup>

PART TWO

# THE CONQUEST OF GAUL



*Campaign Against the Helvetii*

**S**HORTLY after Cicero's removal, alarming news reached Rome. Transalpine Gaul was threatened with invasion. Hundreds of thousands of barbarians, with their women and children trailing along behind them, were pouring down from the north towards the Lake of Geneva. They were nearing the right bank of the Rhône and showed every intention of crossing the river—which served as a frontier—and of penetrating into the Roman province. These were the Helvetii, reputed to be, with the Belgae, the most courageous of the Gallic tribes. It was even said that before starting on their journey they had set fire to their towns and villages, thus proving their determination never to return, and it was further claimed that they were bringing with them enormous quantities of provisions which they had been accumulating for two years. What means had the Romans of checking the advance of this human tide? They had one legion, that is to say, six thousand men, providing—and this was uncertain—it was at maximum strength. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the neighbouring tribes were in a state of unrest and there was the danger that an initial success of the Helvetii might cause the tribes in those parts of Gaul not yet under Roman domination to join with them in liberating the land now held in subjection.

All this made it urgent for Caesar to proceed immediately to his province, where indeed he should normally have gone several weeks earlier. He was therefore obliged to cut short his subtle negotiations and to depart with the greatest haste, accompanied only by a handful of his closest associates. He took eight days to cover the seven hundred miles or so between Rome and Geneva, travelling about eighty-five miles a day, which at that time was an extraordinary achievement.

He arrived on the 2nd of April, 58. He knew barely anything of the country. He had never been there before. He had come to wage war—he, the subtle diplomat, the crafty politician, who had always appeared to prefer the battleground of the Forum to any other. But scarcely had he arrived before he showed himself marvellously at

home in this new setting, so full of hidden dangers and risks. Immediately, he made his decision. The Helvetii must be prevented at any price from crossing the Rhône. That was why, before doing anything else, he had the bridge across the river destroyed. At the same time urgent orders were given for a speedy mobilization of the province, which was called upon to give 'all the soldiers it could possibly muster'.

Unexpectedly halted at the last minute, the Helvetii tried to negotiate. They sent Caesar a delegation of 'the most noble men of their city' to acquaint him with their intentions and to reach an agreement. They simply asked for the right of passage through the Roman province in order to reach the land where they proposed to settle. Far from wishing to make war on the Romans, they promised to cause no damage and no devastation.

On hearing the request of the Helvetii, Caesar must have felt a real disappointment. Since his arrival in Geneva his whole conduct pointed to the fact that he fully intended to make war. The threat of invasion by the Helvetii, so conveniently announced in Rome during the second half of March 58 had given him a providential opportunity of embarking upon a military campaign, the object of his ardent longings. Perhaps he would have preferred to have another two or three months to complete his preparations, but since the action had been launched, even if somewhat prematurely, there could be no question in his mind of going back. Legally, his mission was to ensure the defence and security of his province by every possible means. This did not necessarily mean that he was obliged at all costs to use armed force. It was perfectly permissible for the exalted representative of the Roman Republic to use gentler methods to obtain this result, and since the Helvetii showed themselves to be so peacefully disposed there seemed to be nothing to prevent an amicable arrangement which would allow them to reach the end of their wanderings without harming Roman territory. This was not what Caesar wanted. He preferred war, but, as he was not yet ready to fight the enemy with armed might, he resorted to cunning, a tested weapon in the use of which he was a master.

He received the leaders of the Helvetii, listened to them and replied 'that he would consider the matter and that if they wanted to know his decision, they must come back at the Ides of April', that is to say, in eight days. The members of the delegation were completely satisfied by this answer and went off full of hope. Actually Caesar's

decision was already made and all he wanted was to gain time. This delay of a week was what he needed to fortify the defensive positions on the left bank of the Rhône, and to allow time for the arrival of at least a part of the troops which had been called up.

Work started at once. Hardly had the Helvetii left when a feverish activity filled the camp at Geneva where Caesar had established his headquarters. Native workmen, hastily conscripted from all parts of the country, began to pour in. They were immediately sent to the Rhône where, under the active supervision of Roman legionaries, they were employed in hewing into perpendicular faces the upper parts of the heights which rose by easy slopes from the river bank. Others dug trenches. They dug more than 15,000 feet, placing the trenches at intervals, so that the natural obstacles which the Rhône afforded during the greater part of its course were reinforced, particularly in the more vulnerable places, where a crossing might have been attempted. In less than three days, an insuperable barrier was erected which stretched from Geneva to the narrow passage of the Ecluse and could easily be defended by the limited forces as yet at Caesar's disposal.

When the Helvetian delegation came back on the appointed day for Caesar's reply they were told that 'the customs and precedents of the Roman people did not allow him to grant the right of passage through the province and that he would oppose any attempt to force one'. With this the interview came to an end and the Helvetian leaders returned to their camp. Caesar, to whom we are indebted for these details, does not speak of their reactions. They can well be imagined.

During the following days the Helvetii made several attempts to cross the Rhône in boats and on rafts, but in vain. They found the obstacles in their way to be insurmountable. They gave up the enterprise and decided to take another route, the narrow and difficult one of the Jura which passed through the country of the Sequani.

Thus ended the attempted 'invasion'. It was a success for Caesar, a very great success. Without any losses, material or otherwise, he had preserved his province from being overrun by more than 350,000 barbarians, nearly a third of whom were armed fighters, and had protected it against future onslaughts by building a strongly fortified frontier.<sup>121</sup> He did not, however, intend to content himself with this result, brilliant as it might be, nor to remain purely on the defensive. It was now that he dropped the mask of the wayward and nonchalant man of pleasure, which had concealed the designs of the conqueror,

and showed to the men of his time that likeness which will be for ever associated with his memory.

Fate decreed that Caesar's personal ambitions should synchronize perfectly with the imperialistic tendencies of Roman policy. From the day when the Republic laid hands on that part of Gallic territory which was given the name of Transalpine Gaul, it was clear that sooner or later its domination would spread over all this land inhabited by a people whom the Romans considered as their immemorial enemy. The rhythm of conquest might be quicker or slower ; what Caesar achieved in ten years would perhaps have taken others a century, but inexorably Gaul was following its historical destiny and travelling towards the loss of national independence and the inclusion of its territory within the borders of the Roman State. Well before Caesar's time Rome had begun her disruptive action by fomenting internal strife among the Gauls. She knew how to take advantage of the tribal rivalries which rent their cities, for the country was split up into an infinity of minute 'States' grouped round three main peoples : the Aedui, the Arverni, and the Sequani. Her tactics were simple : first, a 'Roman' party had to be created inside the country in order to prepare the ground for eventual penetration. This was achieved by exploiting the private jealousies and unsatisfied political ambitions of the native leaders. The Aedui, ousted from supremacy by the Sequani, lent themselves perfectly to this method. There were among them two brothers who were contending for power. The elder, Divitiacus, was known to have 'Romanophile' leanings, while the younger, Dumnorix, represented what would now be called the 'nationalist party' and dreamed of a free federation of Gallic cities under his leadership. It was he who finally triumphed and his elder brother, who was obliged to go into exile, betook himself to Rome, where he rapidly made useful contacts in political circles. He returned to Gaul in Caesar's train and became his most active and devoted agent.

We have seen how the Helvetii, faced with the impossibility of crossing the Rhône, were obliged to take the road that wound through the narrow passes of the Jura and, crossing the land of the Sequani, led to the country of the Aedui. They came to an understanding with Dumnorix who rightly saw in them his future allies ; his intervention with the Sequani secured a free passage for them through this territory.<sup>122</sup>

Meanwhile Caesar was displaying a superhuman activity. Hardly

was the interview with the Helvetian leaders at an end when he leapt into the saddle and departed post-haste for Italy to meet the three legions coming from their winter quarters in Aquileia whence he had summoned them the moment he arrived in Geneva. At Milan he ordered the formation of two more, and in the meantime he rapidly completed his lists of command appointments and organized his ancillary services. As soon as the Illyrian troops arrived he gave the order to march, and, at the head of an army which must have numbered about thirty thousand men, he took the shortest route to Transalpine Gaul by way of the Alps.

The passage of Caesar's legions did not fail to attract the attention of the mountain tribes, who, tempted by the procession of vehicles loaded with provisions, quickly decided to lay an ambush. Caesar, warned by his scouts, acted with the greatest caution. The brigands were guarding the pass leading to Geneva, but Caesar, although anxious to arrive at his destination, preferred not to fight in so dangerous a region. As usual, he found a way of circumventing the difficulty without running great risks. The course he adopted on this occasion has become famous. Polyænus has recorded it in his *Stratagems*. Here is his account :

He [Caesar] studied the nature of the climate and noticed that numerous rivers came down from the mountains to form deep lakes whence at dawn thick mists rose. Caesar made half his troops go round the mountains at this early hour. The fog made them invisible to the barbarians, who did not move. But, when Caesar's soldiers reached the heights which dominated the positions of the mountain tribesmen, they began to shout. The remainder of the army replied from down below and all the surrounding mountains echoed with their shouting. The barbarians were terrified and took flight.<sup>123</sup>

This was how Caesar avoided exposing his troops to a hazardous battle and brought them unscathed through the narrow Alpine pass.

Historians do not agree about the route which he took afterwards.<sup>124</sup> Jullian makes him reach the Rhône by the Col de Cabre. General von Goeler and Napoleon III, who consulted with the best officers of the imperial staff in order to reconstruct the itinerary of Caesar's campaigns, make him pass by the Romanche river and Grenoble. Everybody agrees, however, that Lyons was the last halting-place of



a march which had taken the Illyrian legions forty days at the rate of about eighteen miles a day.

During Caesar's absence there had been some serious incidents among the Aedui. The Helvetii had entered their territory and were pursuing their way westwards. As they went, some of them indulged in pillage and violence. We do not know the extent of the damage done, but at all events the 'Roman' party, in the person of its leader Divitiacus, raised an outcry: 'Dumnorix has delivered the country into the hands of the barbarians! The Helvetii are bringing anarchy and ruin in their wake! The Aeduan nation is lost! etc., etc.' Their only means of salvation was to appeal for help to the Romans, who would know how to inflict suitable punishment upon these plunderers, and who would guarantee peace and security for the Aedui. Making the most of his opportunity, Divitiacus took his brother's place at the head of the government and proceeded to give it a radical 'change of orientation'. Caesar was officially invited to come and deliver the land of the Aedui from the Helvetii and to re-establish order and tranquillity among them. We do not imagine that he was unduly surprised when, immediately upon his return, his agent Divitiacus presented him with this request. He agreed without hesitation and asked but little of the Aedui: a few military detachments and the necessary supplies for the duration of the campaign.

Caesar chose Lyons as his base of operations. He had by now a fairly large army at his disposal. In addition to the thirty thousand men he had brought from Italy, there were the Tenth Legion under the command of Labienus, the detachment of cavalry provided by the Aedui in accordance with their agreement, and a certain number of auxiliary troops recruited among the inhabitants of the province. The total was close upon fifty thousand men. It is true that the Helvetii had almost double the number, but they were hampered in their movements by the great multitude of women, old men, and children who were following along behind them.

The Helvetii were still making their way towards the Saône. They moved extremely slowly, encumbered as they were by the eight thousand wagons and other vehicles of every description which formed their rearguard. It would have been the easiest thing in the world for Caesar to catch up with them and engage them in battle. He did not do so. He let them reach the Saône. He waited until they began to cross the river. For nineteen days on end he was content to remain passively at a distance while this operation was

going on, merely keeping a watch on it by means of his scouts. At last, on the twentieth day, he learnt that the greater part of the Helvetian host (three out of four divisions) had crossed the Saône and that the last division, left by itself on the river bank, was preparing to go over in its turn. Then, sure of his numerical superiority, he left his camp under cover of night and made a surprise attack upon the Helvetii, of whom a great many were slain. 'The others fled and hid in the neighbouring forest.' It is Caesar himself who tells us about it in his *Commentaries*.

After this victory which did not cost him any great effort he had a bridge constructed over the Saône and crossed it with his army, all in the space of a day. Once on the other side, however, he did not show any intention of following up his success and of attacking the Helvetii, who were visibly disorganized by this sudden defeat. What was Caesar waiting for? We do not know. Perhaps simply for another chance of winning a victory with as little risk as possible. The enemy seemed to have little wish to start a battle. They preferred to negotiate, having never abandoned the hope of coming to an amicable agreement. A Helvetian delegation once more appeared before Caesar. This time it was led by the glorious old chieftain Divicon who, some fifty years before, had won a brilliant victory over the Romans in very much the same district. It has been suggested that this choice on the part of the Helvetii was a blunder if not actually an insult to Caesar. I cannot agree. As a Roman he must surely have felt great pride and satisfaction as he beheld, suppliant before him, the illustrious victor of former days, who had dared to inflict upon one of his predecessors, the consul L. Cassius Longinus, the worst humiliation which could befall a Roman citizen—placing the yoke of subjection upon him and his army. Now he stood before Caesar, humble and resigned—pleading with great dignity on behalf of his countrymen. The version given in the *Commentaries* is all we know of his speech, but even as reproduced by Caesar, who was not given to exaggerated flattery where his enemies were concerned, Divicon's words throughout the interview indicate a dignified attitude and bear the stamp of true nobility. He had come to ask for peace. His people were prepared to settle 'in the place which should be assigned to them by the will of the Roman nation'; in other words, by Caesar. This proposition must not, however, be taken as a mark of failure and collapse. He had not come vanquished, imploring mercy from the victor, and he did not fail to recall 'the Roman

army's defeat in the past' and 'the ancient valour of the Helvetii'. As he dwelt on this memory the old warrior became deeply moved. His tone changed, growing proud and haughty: 'Having thrown himself unexpectedly upon one division, when their companions who had crossed the river were unable to come to their assistance, Caesar could in no way attribute his success to his courage.' 'The Helvetii had learnt from their ancestors to trust to their bravery rather than to cunning and snares', the old man added. Then, as if these offensive allusions were not enough, he made a point of recalling that the same ground on which they stood had already been marked by a Roman disaster and the destruction of their army.

Caesar replied with a subtle speech—too subtle perhaps—in which he tried to represent the defeat of former days as the result of a surprise of which the enemy had taken advantage. But even supposing that he wanted to forget 'this ancient injury', how could he also be unmindful of 'those which were of recent date'? These 'recent injuries', according to Caesar, were 'the attempt which they [the Helvetii] had made to cross Roman territory in spite of him' and the looting by their troops on their way through the land of the Aedui. As for 'the insolent vanity' which they drew from their victory over the Romans, it simply proved to him quite clearly the intentions of Providence.

'The immortal gods,' declared Caesar, 'in order to render a punishment more terrible by a sudden reversal of fortune, often grant passing successes and a longer impunity to the very people whom they are about to punish.'

Thereupon he formulated his demands: a certain number of hostages were to be handed over as a guarantee of their promises, and reparation was to be made for all the damage they had caused. On these conditions he was ready to make peace. The Helvetii refused. Divicon replied in a somewhat arrogant tone that his countrymen 'had inherited from their fathers the custom of receiving hostages, not of giving them', and that 'the Romans ought to know it'.

This is the way matters are presented by Caesar in his *Commentaries*. His version appears incomplete and definitely defective. He does not tell us everything. Far from it! Moreover, among the things he does say there are some which seem to contradict the truth. First, what exactly were the terms proposed to the Helvetii? He only mentions hostages and reparations. There is not a word about the

fate he had in store for the Helvetian people. Does this mean that, once the two conditions had been fulfilled, he was prepared to leave them free to pursue their journey? It does not seem likely. Had it been so, it is inconceivable that the Helvetii would not have hastened to accept his proposals, since they themselves had left the choice of their future abode to him. The sharp and rude reply made by Divicon leads us to suppose that Caesar had given him to understand that he would not allow the Helvetii to settle anywhere but on their former territory. As we shall see later on, this fitted in exactly with the plans he had in mind. Even Divicon's answer does not seem to have been accurately interpreted, for, as reported by Caesar, it is utter nonsense and could have been contradicted on the spot by any of the people present. How could he, for instance, proclaim with such assurance that his people had never given hostages when quite recently, at the time of the agreement allowing them to pass through the territory of the Sequani, they had given a large number of them as proof of their peaceful intentions? This is not to say that Caesar's account is a conscious perversion of the truth, but it may be supposed that he was misled on this occasion by a faulty translation of the Helvetian leader's words, for which the interpreter was to blame.

At all events, negotiations were brought to an end and the war started again. From the outset it was conducted in a very unusual fashion. The opposing armies were on the march, one following the other at a distance of about ten miles. It was not a matter of pursuing a defeated army in retreat. The Helvetii were moving in good order and without haste towards the land they had chosen for themselves. Their convoys were protected by small detachments of cavalry which formed their rearguard. Caesar followed them but did not attack. He let his legions march in their tracks at a certain distance. An Aeduan corps of cavalry, made up of elements furnished by Divitiacus in fulfilment of his treaty with Caesar and numbering in all about four thousand men, was placed at the head of the Roman army under the command of Dumnorix, who had ended by falling in with the new political orientation of his country. They were given the task of harassing the enemy and watching the direction of their march. On one occasion, after surprising some five hundred Helvetian horsemen who had become separated from the main body, the Aeduan cavalry, sure of their crushing superiority, started a battle. They were disgracefully beaten and fled in confusion. The 'communiqué' in which Caesar reports this inglorious engagement is

drawn up in deliberately evasive terms which, however, do not succeed in disguising the humiliation of this defeat. We read there, in particular, that 'the cavalry [of Caesar], having pursued the rear-guard of the Helvetii with too much ardour, came to blows with their cavalry in a place where conditions were to their disadvantage and suffered some losses'.

For a whole fortnight the situation remained unchanged. Caesar was obviously avoiding a battle. His attempts to explain this passive attitude in his *Commentaries* are not very convincing: 'Caesar restrained the eagerness of his soldiers and for the time being contented himself with opposing the robbery, pillage, and devastation carried out by the enemy.' How, by what methods—that he does not tell us. It may very well be that this is a case of the habitual camouflaging of the truth which those who report on military affairs in all centuries and countries are so frequently obliged to practise. Jullian believes that 'worried over the result of the first encounter, he [Caesar] had forbidden any further attack'. Undoubtedly the rapid defection of the 'allied' detachments put at his disposal by the Aedui, together with the high combative quality of the Helvetii which had just been so strikingly demonstrated, gave him cause for extreme caution. But there were other reasons, and perhaps more important ones, which prevented him from engaging in a decisive battle. He had crossed the Rhône and penetrated to the interior of the Aeduan country on the pretext of answering Divitiacus' appeal on behalf of his people. He had imagined at first that this leader, supported as he was by the Romans, would have been able to convince his countrymen that they must rally round him so as to serve Caesar loyally and to carry out their promises. But very soon the truth had been borne in on him that he was cherishing vain illusions in this respect. The Aeduan 'nationalist' party had in no way departed from its anti-Roman attitude. Its supporters were carrying on active propaganda among the population and had gained the sympathies of the people.

'By means of seditious and wicked speeches, they discouraged the people from providing the corn which they had agreed to deliver; they said that if they [the Aedui] could not gain supremacy over Gaul, they would at least prefer to be dominated by other Gauls rather than by Romans; that the people could be certain that once the latter had defeated the Helvetii they would deprive the Aedui and the other peoples of Gaul as well of their liberty.' Thus spoke the highest magistrate in the country, the *vergobret*<sup>125</sup> Liscus, in a verbal

report which he addressed to Caesar and to which we shall return later ; and there is no reason to doubt that his statement corresponded with the true situation. As a matter of fact Caesar had soon become aware of it himself. The promised convoys of provisions did not arrive, the most inconsistent excuses were offered for the delay, and his food stocks were nearly exhausted. Things were going from bad to worse, and had reached such a point that his supply service had announced that it would be impossible to make the next issue of corn, which was due in four days. Divitiacus, the head of the Aeduan government, and the supreme judge, Liscus, were both at headquarters. Caesar sent for them as well as for the other Aeduan leaders. The interview which followed is reported in the *Commentaries* with abundant details and deserves a close examination.

It begins with a series of bitter reproaches which Caesar addressed to the Aedui. 'He complained vehemently to them that, being unable to buy provisions or to live off the land by taking what he required, he was not receiving any help from his allies in his urgent need and in the presence of the enemy. The way they had abandoned him was all the more blameworthy since it was largely at their request that he had undertaken the war.' It was then, during an embarrassing silence, that the *vergobret* Liscus, apparently 'moved by Caesar's words', began to speak, denouncing the harm of anti-Roman propaganda which, according to him, prevented the promised deliveries. Part of his speech has been already quoted. He did not confine himself to generalities. Without actually naming anyone, he gave Caesar to understand that certain highly placed personalities were involved and that 'he was well aware of the danger to which he was exposing himself by the declarations which necessity forced him to make'.

Caesar appeared to be deeply impressed by this speech. He immediately dismissed everyone except the *vergobret*, his interpreters, and the young native C. Valerius Procillus, son of a distinguished Gaul at whose house he must have stayed when he first came to Geneva. Summoned to say all he knew, Liscus became less reticent and indicated Dumnorix as chiefly responsible for the activities he had denounced. This was no unexpected revelation to Caesar, as he tells us himself. The behaviour of Divitiacus' brother, whose recent attachment to the Roman cause was not calculated to inspire great confidence, had made him suspicious for some time, particularly since the shameful flight of his cavalry before the Helvetii. Without

delay he proceeded to a careful inquiry which not only confirmed the declarations of Liscus, but brought up new charges against Dumnorix, revealing that it was he who had promoted the agreement which enabled the Helvetii to cross the land of the Sequani. Now everything became clear. Caesar held the traitor and only had to act. At the last moment, however, he showed some indecision. If he himself delivered the offender to the executioner, he would help to make him appear to his fellow-citizens as a martyr in the cause of national independence at the hands of the Romans. Caesar realized that this would scarcely tend to increase his own popularity in the country. It was better to leave that task to the Aeduan government itself. All he had to do was to give the necessary orders to Divitiacus who, vowed body and soul to his new masters, would not hesitate for a moment to sacrifice his own brother. The Aeduan leader was therefore summoned. Again, the interview took place in the strictest privacy. Even the interpreters were not present. Valerius Proculus, who alone remained with Caesar, undertook their task. After having heard the accusations brought against his brother Divitiacus 'burst into tears' and started on a fairly long speech which tended to excuse Dumnorix. At the end he appealed not only to Caesar's mercy but to his common sense and political insight: if he proceeded with the execution of his brother the measure 'would alienate from him the hearts of all Gauls' and his influence in the country would be weakened, which would be nothing but a disadvantage to Caesar. The clever Aeduan leader succeeded in convincing him; Dumnorix was called there and then, and Caesar gave him a brief but energetic warning. He was ready to pardon him this time, 'for the sake of the friendship which he bore his brother', but there must be no more of such conduct!

So Dumnorix came out of this dangerous business unhurt. Caesar merely deprived him of his command and kept a close watch on him, 'so as to know what he was doing and with whom he communicated'.

Scarcely was this affair settled when Caesar was informed that the Helvetii had interrupted their march and had halted at the foot of a mountain about seven miles away from the Roman camp. Knowing that this mountain could be reached by indirect roads, he decided to employ the same stratagem which had succeeded so well against the Alpine tribes. Labienus was given orders to proceed during the night with two legions and to occupy the summit dominating the

enemy camp. The other troops were to make a frontal attack, preceded by the cavalry which this time would be under the command of P. Considius, an old warrior who had seen at least twenty years of service and had taken part in the campaigns of Sulla and Crassus. According to Caesar, 'he passed for a soldier of great experience'.<sup>126</sup>

By daybreak Labienus had carried out the occupation of the mountain top without rousing the Helvetii. Caesar's troops were less than a mile away from the Helvetian camp and awaited the signal to launch the attack. At the last moment the new cavalry commander, in a state of wild agitation, came riding 'with unbridled speed' to announce to Caesar that 'the mountain which Labienus had orders to occupy was in enemy hands. He had recognized them by their weapons and their badges!'

The situation appeared to be radically changed, and all Caesar's calculations were upset. Surprise was the essential element on which he had been counting. Without it the operation was dangerous and full of risks. In view of the defeat of Labienus, whose troops, he imagined, had been unable to pass unnoticed and had been cut to pieces by the Helvetii, he gave up all thought of battle, and as a precaution against any attack on the part of an enemy flushed by this initial easily won success, he ordered his army to withdraw to a neighbouring hill and there to entrench themselves against possible assault. This was done. The hours passed. No one moved. The day was well advanced and the Helvetii continued to give no sign of life. Finally Caesar sent to find out what was happening. His scouts returned with tantalizing news; it was the legions of Labienus, right enough, who held the appointed position, and they were waiting in vain for Caesar to attack so that they could play their part when the time came. The 'very experienced' Considius had been mistaken. 'Bewildered by fear,' Caesar explains, 'he said he had seen what he had only dreamed.' During all this time the Helvetii were able to strike camp undisturbed and to continue their march.

It may be wondered why this time, departing from his usual tactics, Caesar had not only made no attempt to 'check the ardour' of his soldiers, but, on the contrary, had himself taken the initiative to prepare an attack which was only prevented by an unfortunate misunderstanding at the last moment. It would seem that it was not so much the desire to gain what in military terms is called a 'victory of prestige' as considerations of a purely material order which had induced him to take action. The food shortage in the Roman army had become



exceedingly serious. On the day when Caesar decided to attack the camp of the Helvetii his soldiers had only enough bread to last them forty-eight hours. There was no sign of the provisions promised by the Aeduan authorities. The only course open to him was to defeat the Helvetii and to seize their stocks, which were still considerable. As this attempt had failed, Caesar had to try another way of solving the difficulty. He gave up the methodical 'pursuit' of the enemy and ordered his army to turn northwards in the direction of Bibracte, the capital of the Aeduan country which was less than twenty miles away. The object of this new operation was easy to guess. After the events of the last days he had finally realized that it was useless, if not imprudent, to trust the promises and assurances which the Aeduan leaders showered upon him. As for Divitiacus, whose loyalty and goodwill were beyond question, he apparently did not have enough authority with his fellow-citizens to make them fulfil the commitments which he had contracted with Rome in the name of his country. By occupying the Aeduan capital with his troops and seizing all the provisions which were stored there, Caesar could secure the means of feeding his army for a long period, and that, for the moment, was his chief concern.

It was then that the Helvetii made a fatal mistake. Informed by some deserters from the Roman camp of Caesar's new march, they interpreted it as a sign of weakness and a clear proof of his military impotence. Encouraged by their recent successes, instead of going on their way without fear of being attacked by the Romans, they made a right-about turn and took the offensive themselves. The situation immediately became complicated. At the very moment when Caesar was preparing to help himself to the stores of provisions at Bibracte he was obliged to fight. Willingly or not, he accepted the challenge. The Aeduan cavalry was ordered to harass the enemy and delay their advance as much as possible. Meanwhile he ranged his troops in battle array on a neighbouring height. The situation was serious. Not only was his own future at stake, but with it the very fate of the Roman domination of Gaul, for it was clear that in the event of a Helvetian victory the Aeduans would not fail to take up arms immediately, in order to rid themselves of their 'protectors', and that could not but have rapid repercussions throughout the Roman province.

Caesar started by sending away all his officers' horses, his own included, 'in order to make the peril equal for all, and flight

impossible'. He tells us this himself and it is worth remembering these words. They prove how little confidence he had in the military worth and courage of his assistants, most of whom had actually been imposed upon him by considerations of a political order and through recommendations when he was recruiting his personnel. At the same time this sign of mistrust and scorn cannot but have offended and humiliated a good number of the young adventurers who had followed Caesar in the hope of acquiring glory and wealth in abundance, at the price of the least possible effort. Then, taking up his position on the top of the hill, he spoke a few words to his soldiers as was the custom, encouraging them for the battle. After that he gave the order to march against the enemy who were already coming up to attack. The struggle was long and fierce and lasted well into the night.<sup>127</sup> The Helvetii, whose primitive arms could not match the perfected weapons of the Romans, suffered heavy losses and were obliged to beat a retreat, abandoning their camp with the provisions and baggage it contained. They entrenched themselves on a neighbouring hill, determined to carry on a defensive battle. Caesar, however, refrained from attacking them. He had suffered considerable losses himself. Of course he does not give their number, but by telling us that it took three whole days to bury his dead and to attend to his wounded (a thing he never mentions anywhere else in the course of the Gallic wars), he has enabled us to get some idea of their extent.

The Helvetii made use of this lull and tried to withdraw into the land of the Lingones, but Caesar was able to stop them by exploiting the victory he had just won. Messengers were sent immediately to all the peoples whose land the Helvetii might try to cross, announcing that it was absolutely forbidden to grant them any provisions or help 'under pain of being themselves treated like the Helvetii'.

These orders were obeyed. When the Helvetii came to the Lingones, they were refused all assistance. Finding that they were abandoned by everyone and condemned to die of hunger, they were forced to give in and send envoys to Caesar. After a few days' rest he was again on the march behind them, this time amply supplied with food, and his object was to complete the destruction of his vanquished enemy. They met half-way. Caesar refused to treat with them. There was no further question of negotiations. The Helvetii had only to carry out his orders.

He let them know what these orders were as soon as he arrived:

hostages, arms, and deserters must be given up to him without delay. There was nothing to do but obey. The disarmament began at once. It lasted all night. There were no signs of resistance, but six thousand Verbigenes, under cover of darkness and hoping that their disappearance would not be noticed, left the camp enclosure and made their way towards the German frontier of the Rhine. They did not get far. Caesar was informed of their flight. Once more his messengers went out, bearing orders from the Roman proconsul to the peoples whose territory might be crossed by the fugitives. As soon as they appeared they were to be captured, disarmed, and brought back to Caesar's camp.

Such was the fear his name inspired that no one dared disobey, and the six thousand Verbigenes had scarcely entered the country of the Sequani when they were arrested and delivered up to the Romans.

What was the fate of these last-minute offenders? This is difficult to determine. Caesar himself is very evasive about it, merely declaring that they were 'treated as enemies'. Dion Cassius asserts that they were 'exterminated', which is quite possible. Yet we must take into account Caesar's practical turn of mind and his business sense. At his time there were two alternatives for a prisoner: death or slavery. In having thousands of victims put to the sword a conqueror could fully satisfy his instincts of cruelty and quench his thirst for vengeance, but he gained no material advantage. In putting them up for sale he reaped substantial benefits in proportion to the market value of the human cattle to be disposed of. Six thousand strong, war-hardened barbarians, belonging to a people whose physical qualities were particularly appreciated in the slave market could bring him at least the equivalent of the sacking of a large town, all the more so as the law on sharing booty, which substantially reduced the takings of the leader, did not apply in this case. We may therefore suppose that instead of condemning them to an unprofitable massacre, Caesar preferred to negotiate with some representative of the slave merchants, whose agents invariably accompanied the Romans on military expeditions of any importance.

He also had to decide upon the fate of the hundred and ten thousand Helvetii who had thrown themselves unresistingly upon his mercy. Deprived of arms and provisions, they waited for the conqueror to pronounce upon their future. The solution which Caesar found shows political foresight of a high order: he commanded the Helvetii to return to their country and to rebuild the towns and hamlets which

they had burnt down before their departure, and as they no longer had any provisions at all (Caesar had no intention of returning those he had seized after capturing their camp), the neighbouring Allobroges were ordered to provide them with food until such time as they could procure it for themselves.

In his *Commentaries* Caesar has set down his object with all the precision that could be desired: 'He did not want this country [of the Helvetii] to remain deserted lest the Germans from beyond the Rhine, attracted by the fertility of the soil, should leave their own land for this one and become the neighbours of our province and of the Allobroges.'

By establishing a kind of buffer state intended to prevent the possibility of a sudden Germanic invasion into the interior of the Roman province of Gaul, Caesar thought to secure for himself the necessary freedom of action to complete the conquest of a people who, as Camille Jullian puts it, of their own free will 'were rushing headlong towards slavery'.<sup>128</sup>

*Ariovistus*

THE crushing defeat of the Helvetii had profound repercussions throughout Gaul. Caesar's personal prestige was immeasurably increased, and that of Rome, which had been somewhat declining of late, was re-established. Considerable changes developed in the internal relations between the various Gallic peoples. Up to this time they had been able to choose between two orientations: the Roman, as represented by the Aedui, and the German, as represented by the Sequani, who had been the first to look across the Rhine for help in settling their internal quarrels. The position of the Aedui was strengthened by Caesar's victory over the Helvetii. The smaller 'client' tribes rallied round them in increasing numbers, hoping likewise to gain the favour of Rome. In practice this meant that the Aedui were able to control the general direction of the country's affairs, to the detriment of the Sequani, whose political influence was steadily waning. As, moreover, the Aedui were led by Divitiacus, who in his turn was merely a docile and obedient instrument in the hands of Caesar, we can speak of the conquest of Celtic Gaul as of an accomplished fact from the day after the battle of Bibracte. There would no doubt be local resistance to put down here and there, sporadic insurrection to be crushed, but from now on, without even having tried to fight, the Gauls were adapting themselves to that oncoming slavery of which Jullian speaks with so much bitterness. Better still, they seemed to revel in it.

Their first step after Caesar's victory provides a striking example of servile obsequiousness. Deputations hastened to congratulate Caesar and to express to him all the gratitude of the Gallic peoples for having saved them from the 'Helvetian peril'.<sup>129</sup> On the same occasion they asked for authorization to meet in a general assembly because 'they had a petition to make to Caesar'. In other words, these representatives of a people supposedly still in possession of its civic rights no longer dared so much as to hold a council without first asking permission from a master who to all appearances did not even expect this excessive zeal. Clumsy as it was, however, this step

was extremely significant : it set the tone of future relations ; the Gauls were to solicit and obey ; Caesar was to command and decide.

Having received permission to meet, the Gauls fixed the day for their assembly which took place as arranged. Although it was held in the greatest secrecy and each of the participants was obliged to swear that he would reveal no word of the discussions, we can, by way of deduction, guess the object of their deliberations and the decisions which they must have reached.

First we notice that it was inevitably Divitiacus who was appointed as spokesman of the delegation which came to Caesar at the end of the conference. This gives grounds for concluding that he had been able to gain the confidence of the assembly and to obtain the mandate to speak in their name. It also means that as the representative of the Roman element he had succeeded in imposing his will upon all his compatriots, and, since there were also some Sequani among the delegates received by Caesar, it is quite evident that in spite of their Germanophile tendencies they had ended by joining the dominant party. In doing so, however, they were obliged implicitly to recognize the Aeduan supremacy, and this led to a total change in the internal balance of power in the Gallic community. It was undoubtedly the problem of whether Aeduan leadership should be recognized as supplanting the influence of the Sequani which must have provided the main subject for the debates which ended, as we have just seen, in the absolute triumph of the cause personified and defended by the head of the Aeduan government. When we remember the close bonds which united Divitiacus to Caesar, we might almost go so far as to say that it was really the latter who was pulling the strings in this puppet show which his will had called into a semblance of action, in order to distract the people's attention and prevent them from realizing his true intentions—at least for the time being.

In order to understand the motives which guided him we must go back a little.

When, a year before, Caesar the consul had asked the Senate—in a speech of which the text has not come down to us—that the German leader Ariovistus should be granted the title of 'king and friend of the Roman people', and when he had afterwards made the same request before the *comitia*, he undoubtedly did not imagine that in so short a time he would have to use the language of armed force to renew his connections with his former protégé. No doubt the possibility of a military struggle against the Germans was not excluded

from the cycle of events which he planned to set in motion, but it was surely not to be expected so soon. For the moment he regarded Ariovistus as an 'ally' to be treated with caution and respect, whose help might be useful in many circumstances. He knew the value of the troops at this leader's disposal and realized the substantial support they might afford him. He could draw upon them for reinforcements in his future campaigns. The remuneration could be discussed later, though his intention was that it should be no more than what was habitually paid to the grasping mercenary captains Rome found it convenient to employ from time to time. While recognizing the bravery and war experience of Ariovistus, yet he saw in him nothing but an uncivilized barbarian, without a statesman's vision and incapable of a policy of methodical imperialistic conquest comparable to his own. Now, while Caesar was engaged in the campaign against the Helvetii, this 'barbarian' was giving proof of great energy and enterprise. After the battle of Magetobriga (61 B.C.), in which he had decimated the Gallic troops, he had seized the north-eastern portion of the Sequani territory, that is to say, about a third of the whole country. Now he had just issued an ultimatum to the Sequani ordering them to surrender another third which he needed to provide homes for twenty-four thousand of his people who were on the point of crossing the Rhine. It was becoming apparent that once he had obtained this second third, the remainder would inevitably follow, and thus the whole of the land of the Sequani would pass to the Germans. After that, the aggressors would have nothing left to do but to attack the rest of Gaul, including the Roman province. If they were allowed to go on, they would soon establish their outposts on the very frontiers of the metropolis and directly threaten Rome in her own domain.

One of the main principles of Caesar's tactics is very well expressed in a speech which Dion Cassius attributes to him on this subject and which will be more fully developed later on. 'We must defend ourselves', he said, 'not only against the actions but even against the projects of those who threaten us; we must oppose the growth of their power before it has harmed us and we must not wait till they have injured us before we take vengeance.'

The Roman Senate did not share his view. It was not in favour of such preventive wars. It was always ready to defend its conquests by force of arms, but it did not wish to provoke new conflicts. Caesar had been entrusted with a precise and clearly defined mission: he

was to be responsible for the defence of Roman possessions against all enemy attempts. But that was all : the powers he had been granted did not allow him to engage in an offensive war of his own accord. He could not embark upon a campaign against the Germans, unless they were the aggressors. This aggression, however, could be interpreted in a wider sense : it need not necessarily be aimed directly at Rome herself. It was enough if Ariovistus attacked the rights of a people placed under her protection. This people could then appeal to the protecting power which had undertaken to guarantee that its liberty and independence should be respected by other States. Thus armed intervention would become legitimate, appearing no longer as a pure and simple act of aggression.

On closer examination, this seems to have been the true aim of the 'spontaneous' assembly of the Gallic peoples. The idea was to organize, probably through the efforts of Divitiacus, a sort of collective manifestation of the national will which would finally lead to an appeal, solemnly presented to Caesar in the name of all the Gauls, to come and defend them against the invader. The subsequent turn of events fully supports this hypothesis.

After reaching a decision the assembly dispersed. Its promoters, led by Divitiacus, then came to Caesar asking for an audience 'without witnesses and in a secret place'. It was a matter 'which concerned their safety and that of the whole country', they said.

Caesar agreed. The interview took place. Caesar describes it in dramatic terms aimed above all at showing the necessity for the measures he decided upon. The delegates started by throwing themselves at his feet and bursting into tears. They appeared to be in great anguish and above all terrified lest the step they were taking should be made public. 'If their words became known', they asserted, 'they would be condemned to fearful tortures.' By whom, and why? The speech which their spokesman Divitiacus was about to pronounce will tell us.

The historical review of relations between the Sequani and the Aedui with which it opened was probably added by Caesar later, for the benefit of his future readers who might not be familiar enough with local affairs in Gaul. Properly speaking, the speech of the Aeduan leader begins with his attack on Ariovistus, 'a coarse man, hot-tempered and capricious'. The limit had been reached. It was impossible to bear his tyranny any longer. If his actions were allowed to continue unchecked, there would be nothing left for the Gauls but



to follow the example of the Helvetii, and to seek refuge under other skies, far from the grasping greed of the Germans. In saying this the over-clever orator probably did not realize that he was making a very important statement, for if the attempt of the Helvetii to escape from Germanic domination had had such an unfortunate ending, there was no reason why the fate of the Aedui and Sequani should be any better, and in that case they would undoubtedly have to face the same unpleasant prospect of being made to return by force of arms to their respective territories. He had merely said this for oratorical effect, however, and no one thought of taking his words literally. The essential point was brought out clearly and directly in his peroration : ' Caesar, by his personal prestige and that of his army, thanks to his recent victories and thanks to the respect which the name of Rome inspires, can prevent further invaders from crossing the Rhine and can protect Gaul from the violence of Ariovistus.' With this invitation to draw the sword and to fly to the help of a friendly Gaul threatened by barbarians, Divitiacus ended his speech.

Then the delegation resumed its chorus of groans and tears. Only the Sequani deputies remained apart ; silent and motionless, they did not join in this wave of lamentation which rose higher and higher in Caesar's ears. Their attitude finally attracted his attention and, surprised to see that ' alone among all the rest they did none of the things the others were doing', he asked them the reason. The Sequani were silent. What could they say ? Their national pride humiliated, despoiled of all their power, reduced to the rôle of mere supernumeraries, forced to appear at this interview planned and organized by their triumphant rivals, there was nothing left for them but to bow before the force of circumstances and by their presence to make what was equivalent to an act of submission. It revolted them, however, to take any active part in the pitiful performance which was being enacted before their eyes. Caesar repeated his question. It remained unanswered. Obviously put out, he insisted ' several times', without result. To put an end to this embarrassing situation, the astute Divitiacus offered an explanation : ' If the Sequani, even in secret, neither dare to complain nor to ask for help, it is because they fear the cruelty of the absent Ariovistus as though he were present.' And he added for greater effect : ' The other people still have the possibility of flight, while they—whose territory Ariovistus has entered and whose towns are all in his possession—are condemned to endure all his atrocities.' Caesar pretended to be satisfied by this

explanation, although it was highly fanciful since only a third of the Sequani land was as yet occupied by the Germans, and he dismissed the delegation with the assurance of 'his great hopes that the memory of past benefits and his present authority would enable him to induce Ariovistus to desist from violence'.

These words are very characteristic. To begin with, Caesar wanted to appear as a mediator, merely using his personal prestige and the claims he had on Ariovistus because of past services, to bring him back to the ways of moderation, and to make him give up his plans of domination and conquest.<sup>130</sup>

This peaceful language was a very imperfect expression of Caesar's true intentions. In reality, they were quite different. War for him was inevitable. He had definitely decided upon it in his own mind. In order to have public opinion in Rome on his side, however, it was necessary to present Ariovistus as the guilty aggressor and to adopt for himself the attitude of a defender of the weak, obliged, in spite of all his efforts and appeals for peace and moderation, to reply by force of arms to an unjustifiable attack. Gambling on the violent and hasty temper of Ariovistus, he tried above all to provoke him to some sudden action, some irretrievable step which would put the responsibility for the opening of hostilities upon his shoulders. That was why he made a show of preferring the peaceful method of negotiation, though he was careful to conduct his negotiations in such a way as to give Ariovistus good reason to be both alarmed and offended.

The ambassador whom Caesar sent him was charged to ask the leader of the Germans for an interview. He wished to treat with Ariovistus concerning 'affairs of state which were of the highest interest to both of them'. This interview could take place anywhere the German chose, on condition that it was 'half-way between the two armies'.

Therein lay the first difficulty. Caesar was surrounded by his soldiers all equipped for war. Ariovistus was somewhere in Suebia. If he were to comply with Caesar's requirements their meeting place must be in the regions of the Upper Saône, that is to say, in a country under Roman domination and definitely hostile to the Germans. Ariovistus imagined that they were trying to lure him into a trap so as to get rid of him by some rapid and brutal expedient as was customary at that time. He therefore sent a reply which can be summed up as follows : He could not go to see Caesar without being accompanied

by an army. The assembly of his military forces would, however, necessitate the preliminary formation of a considerable stock of provisions, which would cost his people a tremendous effort. After which he made this dry comment full of common sense : ' If he, Ariovistus, had had something to ask of Caesar he would have gone to find him. If Caesar wanted something from him, it was for Caesar to come and see him.' And then, as if he wanted it understood that the leader of the Germans was not to be treated like another Divitiacus, Ariovistus added in conclusion ' that he did not in the least see what Caesar, or for that matter the Romans in general, had to do with a part of Gaul which belonged to him by right of conquest '.

In his *Commentaries*, Caesar is silent about his own reactions to the reply of Ariovistus. Dion Cassius tells us that he was ' wounded by these words which he regarded as an insult to all the Romans '. This is quite possible, although he could scarcely have expected a deferential and submissive attitude on the part of the German leader. At all events, the tone of the next message which he dispatched to Ariovistus proves that the turn things were taking was in perfect harmony with his plans and desires.

While stressing the ' great honour ' which had been accorded the German leader by him and by the Roman people, and while deploring ' his way of showing his gratitude to Caesar and to Rome ', the pro-consul abandoned the tone of kindly condescension which he had adopted in his first message. Now he employed the official language of the imperious commander, free from any sentimental considerations. This time he did not attempt to convince—he merely named his conditions. Here they are :

1. Ariovistus must undertake not to send any more hordes of Germans across the Rhine with the object of settling them in Gaul.
2. Ariovistus must return to the Aedui the hostages which he forced them to give up after the battle of Magetobriga.
3. Ariovistus must make no objection to the restitution to the Aedui of those hostages still held by the Sequani.
4. Ariovistus must undertake never to make war either on the Aedui or on their allies.

If Ariovistus accepted these conditions and brought his conduct into conformity with them, Caesar and the Roman people would continue to treat him as a friend. If not—and here came the fateful words on which the future was to depend : ' Supported by the decision of the

Senate which, during the consulship of M. Messalla and M. Piso, had decreed that every governor of the province of Gaul must, as far as the interest of the State permitted, protect the Aedui and all other friends of Rome, Caesar would not leave unpunished the wrongs done to them.'

Dion Cassius is quite right when he says that in this reply Caesar 'was trying less to frighten Ariovistus than to anger him' and to drive him to some irreparable action, but he only half succeeded. Ariovistus did not fall into the trap; he was visibly trying to gain time to complete his preparations. Instead of giving way to some violent and irresponsible impulse as Caesar seems to have anticipated, he replied with another message.

This document reads like a regular diplomatic note, drawn up with considerable skill and discussing and refuting Caesar's demands point by point. His chief argument is that he is only following exactly the policy of the Roman State itself towards its conquered peoples: 'In the traditions of Rome, laws are dictated to the vanquished not according to orders given by a third party but according to her own good pleasure.' Since he, Ariovistus, had never taken the liberty of prescribing to the Romans how they should use their rights, it was but natural that they should not prevent him from using his as he thought fit. The Aedui were his tributaries by virtue of the most elementary laws of warfare: they had tried their fortune with armed force and they had been beaten; logic demanded that they should abide by the consequences of their defeat, just as it decreed that the conqueror should enjoy the fruits of his victory.

Caesar's entry into Aeduan territory had caused Ariovistus serious damage. On the pretext that the Romans were taking everything, the Aedui refused the payments which were due to him by the terms of the peace treaty they had made with the Germans. Accordingly, not only was there no question of returning the hostages given as a guarantee of the loyal fulfilment of the clauses of this treaty but, on the contrary, it was imperative that the Aedui should make up their minds to respect their engagements and start making exact and regular payments, at the stipulated intervals, of the tribute they owed him. They must make their own arrangements with the Romans. That did not concern him. What did concern him was to receive what was his due. If he did not receive it he would know how to demand it in an efficacious manner, and then 'the title of brothers of the Roman people would not be of much use to the Aedui'.

Caesar's threats and his warning that the wrongs done the Aedui would not go unpunished did not impress him. Caesar could come and attack him whenever he liked. 'He would learn then what the Germans, who had never yet been defeated, were able to do.'

In spite of its aggressive content and the arrogance of its tone the reply of Ariovistus, while affording a pretext for hostilities, cleverly evaded all responsibility for their outbreak. Caesar must have realized this, because he did not follow it up, preferring to try another way of precipitating the conflict. Once more luck was on his side; and perhaps he helped it along a little, as far as his means allowed.

Almost coinciding with the reply of Ariovistus two reports reached Caesar's camp, both of them equally strange. The first was brought by a delegation of Aedui. They complained that the Harudes had recently borne down upon them and were ravaging their country. This was sensational news. These Harudes were the very group of German tribes whom Ariovistus proposed to settle in the second third of the Sequani territory. His right to occupy this territory was one of the principal matters of dispute in the threatening conflict. For the moment, this project was decided upon in Ariovistus' mind no doubt, but it had not yet been put into execution. And here were these impatient Harudes, defying all authority, hurling themselves without warning upon Gaul, and the extraordinary thing was that instead of seizing the territory of the Sequani which had been assigned to them by their chief, they were attacking that of the Aedui. Why? Even Jullian with all his experience in solving the topographical and strategic problems of the Gallic wars is puzzled. 'The whole question is most uncertain', he finally has to own.

But the second report was still more astonishing. A delegation, this time made up of Treveri, came to inform Caesar that a hundred German clans had appeared on the right bank of the Rhine and were preparing to cross the river. Now the Treveri, who lived on the banks of the Moselle, could scarcely have seen any Germans coming up from Mainz. As L.-A. Constans has said, this must have been an entirely independent undertaking which had no connection with Ariovistus' plans.

Therefore, if we admit for the moment that these two reports are reliable, we are confronted with three distinct factors: three threats, of which the first, announced by the Aedui, was already developing; the second, revealed by the Treveri, constituted an imminent danger; and the third, resulting from the 'diplomatic conversations' between

Caesar and Ariovistus, was only in the planning stage and might yet be averted by peaceful means at the price of certain concessions. Instead of dealing with the two first, however, and hastening to the help of those regions which were presumably invaded, or about to be invaded at any moment—which would have been in perfect conformity with the wishes of the Senate—Caesar chose to attack an enemy who was at a considerable distance from the territory over which it was his mission to watch. Faced with this paradoxical situation it is permissible to wonder to what extent the two announcements which were brought so aptly to his notice were authentic, and whether he may not have found it convenient to encourage the spreading of such alarming rumours in order to create a sort of alibi for himself in the eyes of the Senate, while he was on the threshold of a campaign which in his own mind had been irrevocably decided upon in advance.

Forced marches by day and night brought Caesar's legions to the powerful fortress of Besançon which he had chosen as the base for his future operations.<sup>181</sup> Caesar galloped at their head, exhausted but triumphant. At last he had wrested from the hands of destiny that war on which he had set his heart ! His enthusiasm was not shared, however, by those who accompanied him. They had just left a rich and fertile land where, after weeks of privation, they had been able to eat as much as they needed and indeed a good deal more. They had been obliged to come away in a hurry, without even being able to bring adequate provisions with them. They were travelling on difficult roads leading right into the unknown to meet a formidable enemy about whom endless stories, each more terrifying than the last, were rumoured. When after five or six days they reached their destination the morale of the troops was very low. On their first contact with the population a veritable panic seized the soldiers. Frightened by the sinister rumours which the natives were circulating about the cruelty of the Germans and their barbarous methods of warfare, they declared loudly that they did not mean to fight. The morale among the officers was even worse : they were in open revolt. 'They were saying everywhere', writes Dion Cassius, 'that, merely to satisfy Caesar's personal ambition, they were going into a war which was neither just nor sanctioned by a public decree, and they threatened to desert him if he did not change his mind.' Caesar himself did not hesitate to stigmatize their cowardly attitude in scathing terms.

'It all began', he tells his readers, of whom more than one must have had a relation or friend with the army in Gaul, 'with the military tribunes, the prefects, and those who, having left Rome with Caesar in order to cultivate his friendship, had no great experience of war. On various pretexts which they declared made their departure imperative, they asked permission to leave the army.<sup>132</sup> A certain number, however, restrained by a sense of honour and anxious to avoid all suspicion of cowardice, stayed in the camp, but they could not control the expression of their faces nor could they keep back occasional tears. They hid in their tents to groan over their fate, or, in the company of their intimates, to deplore the danger threatening them all. There was nothing but the sealing of wills throughout the camp.'

The situation was particularly serious because this contagious fear finally spread to the non-commissioned officers, that is to say, the professionals who represented the solid framework on which Caesar's whole military machine was built. These old soldiers did not dare to groan and lament like the inexperienced youngsters of his staff, but they managed to find all sorts of reasons to justify their apprehension. According to them, it was not the enemy whom they feared. No, they were afraid of the impassable roads they would have to travel in order to get at him, the unfavourable weather conditions of the approaching season, the difficulties connected with provisions which might give out completely in an unexplored country, etc., etc. But above all it was the argument that Caesar was dragging them into an illegal war and was leading them to slaughter for the sole purpose of satisfying his personal ambition which found favour throughout the army. Feeling had reached such a point that deputations from several units came to give Caesar notice that, should an order be given to attack the enemy, they would not carry it out and would not leave their camp.

It is hard to believe that 'the finest army in the world' or at any rate the most experienced and the best disciplined of all the armies of antiquity—an army which could claim so many brilliant victories—should have reached such a state of moral collapse. Yet, Caesar's own testimony is there, clear and indisputable. It leaves no possible room for doubt. The only thing for us to do is to try to discover the causes of this extraordinary crisis.

Besides the tales spread by the country people, which reduced the young recruits and inexperienced junior officers to a state of trembling fear, Caesar cites the critical attitude of his assistants and the open

expressions of mistrust which arose from quite a different source. Like the complaint about an illegal war undertaken by Caesar in direct violation of the wishes of the Senate, they were the result of the underground propaganda of his political enemies who had been able to introduce a considerable number of their agents into all the branches of his army. Caesar was well aware of this infiltration. He knew he was surrounded by spies and traitors who were watching his every move, on the look-out for a slip and ready to exploit the slightest mistake he might make. So far he had not interfered with their secret plottings, waiting for the right moment to strike. Now he was able to judge the full extent of the evil. They had succeeded in undermining the confidence of his army. A little more, and he would find himself deserted by his troops, given up defenceless to the hatred and vengeance of his enemies far and near. Before attacking Ariovistus he had to win another battle in which the stakes were the goodwill and confidence of his soldiers ; and his sole weapon in this battle was the spoken word. His eloquence, his powers of persuasion, his amazing ability to handle an argument, all would be put to use. But what do all these magnificent gifts amount to in dealing with an incredulous and frightened crowd ? . . . That is what he was doubtless asking himself when he was preparing to put them to the test.

The fact that Caesar did not dare to appear before the assembled army and speak directly to his soldiers proves better than anything else how critical the situation seemed to him. Dion Cassius tells us that he feared 'trouble' or 'some culpable action' on their part. Therefore he only called the centurions. It was to them alone that he spoke. Here is his speech. Its tone was violent from the start. Caesar himself tells us so : 'He began by reproaching them vehemently for pretending to know where they were being led and what was being planned, and for reasoning like cowards.' His words were those of a leader addressing his subordinates. He spoke as a soldier to soldiers. Above all he wanted to remind them of their profession. Why did they find themselves in an unknown country, a thousand miles away from their native land ? If some of them had been obliged to come 'in obedience to orders', others, and they were the majority, were there by their own choice and 'because of the honours and advantages which can be gained in war'. But every one of them had come there to fight, and for that reason alone : 'Why have the people sent you here, why have they sent me, for that matter ? . . . Most certainly not so that we might grow fat in unproductive idleness ;



so that in passing through the towns of our allies and the lands we have conquered we should do them more harm than their enemies. . . . Rather, we were sent here to protect our possessions and attack those of our enemies.' Thus, in a few words, the reasons for their presence in those parts were defined. As for those who did not share this point of view, he judged that a peremptory reply, expressed in categorical terms and with brutal frankness, should be enough to reduce them to silence: 'To argue that we ought not to go to war is simply to say that we ought not to be rich, that we ought not to rule over others, that we ought neither to be free nor to be Romans.'

All this was merely the preamble to his speech. Now he was coming to the heart of the matter, and was to display with infinite ingenuity his incomparable gift of persuasion, his art in handling the subtlest of arguments.

He was careful to suggest at the beginning that it was not yet quite certain that they would be obliged to fight. The possibility of a last-minute agreement was not excluded, and he cleverly kept it dangling before the eyes of his audience. He reminded them that hardly a year ago Ariovistus 'had sought the friendship of the Romans with the greatest eagerness'. What reason was there then, Caesar wondered, that 'he should so lightly disregard his obligations'? For his part, he was convinced that 'once Ariovistus knew what Caesar was asking and saw how equitable his propositions were, he would not refuse to live on good terms with him and the Roman people'. What could have seemed more reassuring to his hearers? Only, in pronouncing these comforting words, he did not say that the Germanic chief had already learnt what his propositions were and had replied with a formal refusal. . . . All of this was only what is commonly called 'hot air' calculated to create an atmosphere of serene confidence which would facilitate the delicate task he had undertaken.

Consequently, after having created for his audience this charming illusion with its suggestion of a peaceful ending to the impending conflict, Caesar passed on to realities. His first object was to restore his soldiers' courage, to prove the inanity of the absurd fables about the supposed invincibility of the Germanic army, with which they had been regaled of late.

Even supposing, he argued, that Ariovistus 'in his demented fury' should declare war, what was there to fear? The enemy's overwhelming power? Why, they knew these Germans! It would not be the first time that the Romans measured their strength against

them. Could his hearers have forgotten the brilliant victory Marius had won over them scarcely forty years ago? Had they not been met with later and defeated yet again in the ranks of the army of Spartacus 'and, moreover, on that occasion they had gained additional strength from their military experience and discipline', qualities which they owed to the Romans? Even that had not saved them from defeat. It must further be recalled that many a time the Helvetii had come to blows with the Germans, and that nearly always they had beaten them, not only in their own country but on German soil as well. How could anyone suppose that the Romans, who had been able to crush the Helvetian army so completely, could not overcome an enemy whom the Helvetii had defeated so many times! <sup>133</sup> Certain pessimists and self-styled prophets took the rout of the Gauls at Magetobriga as a bad sign. . . . Caesar would do them the honour of appealing to their intelligence and common sense. Let them think a little and they would easily discover the explanation. 'At a time when the Gauls were getting tired of the long war, Ariovistus, who for many months had not left his camp in the centre of marshes, had attacked them by surprise so that they had no hope of being able to retaliate and consequently had to disperse.' The victory of the Germans was due, Caesar considered, 'less to their military superiority than to the tactics of their leader'. However, tactics which were good enough to defeat the Gauls, whom he dismissed as 'barbarous and inexperienced', were bound to fail when used against the Roman armies which were not so easily caught.

Judging that by this time the apprehensions of his audience should have been calmed, Caesar suddenly changed his tone. He became aggressive and threatening: 'Those who disguise their cowardice by pretending to be worried about the question of supplies and the difficulty of the roads are nothing short of insolent!' They dared to criticize his decisions, they presumed to doubt his capacity! Here, curiously enough, he contented himself with abusing them in harsh terms, but not at great length. He was ever ready to give some explanations. The problem of rations, he announced, was solved; they would be provided by 'friends and allies' in the region, and the next harvest was as good as requisitioned for the needs of the Roman army. As for the route they were going to follow, this matter had been given careful attention: 'They would soon be able to judge of it for themselves.'

There only remained the grave threat of insubordination if he

ordered his troops to march. It was here that Caesar succeeded in bringing off a master-stroke.

He began by proclaiming that this threat did not worry him in the least. Only an incompetent or dishonourable commander was disobeyed. As for him, 'his whole life gave evidence of his disinterestedness and the war with the Helvetii had shown how well he succeeded'. After which, with no more ado, he gave orders for the march to commence that very night, 'before the end of the fourth watch'. According to his own account, he had not intended to give these orders for several days, but now he preferred to have them carried out immediately, 'for he wanted to know if his soldiers would be guided by the voice of honour and duty or by the counsels of fear'. And he proudly flung this challenge at his hearers: 'If no one follows me, I will march just the same.' One legion would be faithful—the Tenth—of that he was certain, even though all the others might abandon him.

In order to make such a categorical statement without the risk of being given the lie, Caesar no doubt had reached a previous agreement with the commander of this legion, his loyal friend Labienus, who did not run a great risk when he gave him definite assurances of his co-operation. He knew as well as Caesar that they would not get far with only one legion, and that after having made this fine gesture and saved the personal prestige of the leader, if not that of the Roman army, Caesar would always be able to find a way of beating a prudent retreat and avoiding a battle with an enemy whose numerical superiority would have proved overwhelming. For the moment he had to produce an immediate psychological effect by exploiting the atmosphere the insinuations and vehemence of his speech had created. He had to take advantage of the belligerent ardour he had so cleverly aroused in the hearts of his old soldiers. The result came up to his expectations. 'When Caesar had finished speaking,' writes Dion Cassius, 'no one dared contradict him, although some did not share his opinion; on the contrary, his words were applauded by all, particularly by those whom he suspected of having spread the rumours to which he had referred.'

Caesar's declarations were immediately communicated to the legionaries, whereupon a deputation from the Tenth Legion appeared before him to proffer their thanks for his flattering opinion of them. At the same time they renewed the assurance of their utter devotion and announced that they were ready to fight under his orders wherever

and whenever he chose. This gesture encouraged other legions to follow suit. They came to offer excuses: 'They had never been guilty of hesitation or fear, they had never thought that it was for them to judge how operations should be conducted; that was their commander's business.' In recording these collective demonstrations of loyalty and obedience he merely made this laconic statement in his *Commentaries*: 'Caesar accepted their explanations.' The main thing was that the soldiers were ready to march. It was therefore imperative to make the most of their willingness and not allow time for their ardour to cool.

Shrouded in the twilight of early morning the columns began to move. They marched for six days without a halt in the direction of the Belfort gap, to meet the enemy. On the seventh, Caesar's scouts informed him that Ariovistus' troops were only about twenty miles away.

Then there was a dramatic interlude. Envoys sent by Ariovistus arrived at the outposts of the Roman army asking to speak with the proconsul. When brought before Caesar they announced that their chief was now willing to agree to the interview previously demanded of him. Since Caesar had by this time arrived nearly at the border of the territory occupied by German troops, one of the essential conditions which Ariovistus had requested was now fulfilled; furthermore, he had completed the concentration and equipment of his troops and therefore his second objection concerning the lack of any guarantee for his personal safety had disappeared of itself. Thus he no longer saw anything to prevent his meeting with Caesar.

Caesar accepted in principle. What exactly could have been the motives which prompted this decision? After having set in motion the whole of the formidable machinery of war which destiny had at last placed under his orders, after arousing by a stroke of incomparable audacity the belligerent spirit of his troops, strengthening their faltering will and stifling the last murmurs of a revolt which had threatened to sweep away in its torrent the achievement of his whole life, after having forced his army to make this strenuous march almost at a run, travelling night and day—did he really, after all this, want to seek a peaceful solution which might at the last minute avoid war? It is hard to believe. Certainly he states in his *Commentaries* that he met Ariovistus because 'he thought that the German was returning to reason, since of his own accord he now proposed the very thing he had previously refused, and Caesar therefore very much hoped that,

in view of the benefits he had received both from himself and the Roman people, Ariovistus would give up his obstinacy once he had examined the condition laid down'. It is most unlikely that he was absolutely sincere when he wrote these lines.

If Caesar thought it necessary to accept the offer of Ariovistus, it was purely because he intended to remain faithful to his previous tactics, and to avoid the responsibility for the rupture by making his adversary the aggressor. What, however, could have been this adversary's real intentions? We can only advance very shadowy hypotheses on this subject, having no information about Ariovistus and his attitude during the conflict except the evidence recorded by his antagonist. But one thing stands out fairly clearly: a chief who imposed on his people the burden of total war for fourteen years on end would not be specially inclined to settle disputes by peaceful methods. We imagine him rather as being ever ready to take up arms in order to defend his claims. This does not, however, in any way imply that he had the preconceived idea of making war for the mere pleasure of fighting. All that we can discover about the character of Ariovistus from the brief and vague references in the *Commentaries*—our only source of information—suggests an intelligent and cunning man who knew what he wanted and who did not mean to rush headlong into rash adventures. He must have been informed of the failure of Caesar's enemies to stir up a revolt in the army, for he was in constant touch with them. Hence he must have gathered that, in the person of Caesar, he had to deal with a powerful and formidable leader, and he judged that it would be more profitable for both of them, instead of fighting against each other, to unite their efforts for the purpose of joint conquests. He conceived of the world as being large enough to satisfy the ambitions of both of them. He did not realize that Caesar considered the whole universe as insufficient to satisfy his own.

The interview was fixed for the fifth day after the arrival of the messengers at Caesar's camp. The interval was spent in choosing the place and settling the conditions for the meeting. It appears to have been Ariovistus who laid them down; Caesar accepted them without discussion, having decided in advance not to keep those which might turn out to be in any way to his disadvantage. Thus, at Ariovistus' request, a very limited number of persons were to be present at the conference. An escort of no more than ten was allowed to each leader. Armed contingents could accompany them provided they remained

at a distance of at least two hundred paces from the meeting place. These contingents must be composed entirely of horsemen. This condition Ariovistus insisted upon. He feared the risk of an ambush, he said, if Caesar's legionaries were present.

Caesar did not question these arrangements, but, no less suspicious than his adversary, he thought of a way of complying with them which, though not exactly correct, provided all necessary guarantees for his safety. Ariovistus did not wish Caesar to bring his foot-soldiers with him? Very well, he would turn them into horsemen! We read in the *Commentaries*: 'Not daring to depend upon the Gallic cavalry to guard his life, Caesar decided that it would be best to make all the Gallic horsemen go on foot and to give their mounts to the soldiers of the Tenth Legion in whom he had the greatest confidence.'

Thus, on the appointed day, Caesar appeared at the head of four thousand of his faithful bodyguard for a conference which was to be one of the decisive turning points in the history of humanity.

*Planities erat magna et in ea tumulus terrenus satis grandis*: It was a wide plain with a fairly large hillock in the centre. It was somewhere in Alsace, between Thann and Mulhouse perhaps.<sup>134</sup> Compact masses of armed horsemen were advancing from two opposite directions. When they arrived within two hundred paces of the hill they stopped. A small group of men came forward from each side and without dismounting began to climb the slopes. Now they were face to face—Caesar and Ariovistus. They beheld each other for the first time. Seated on his legendary white steed, Caesar calmly contemplated the bold adversary who dared to oppose his schemes. Motionless the other faced him, waiting. Caesar was the first to break the silence. The Latin sentences flowed on rhythmically and were translated immediately into Gallic by the interpreters. Ariovistus, for many years familiar with this language, listened patiently.

The *Commentaries* merely give us a summary of the speech, but this is enough to enable us to gather that it was fairly long and made up of three parts. The first was aimed at reminding Ariovistus of the benefits heaped upon him by the Roman Republic, the honours he had received though he was neither entitled to them nor had any motives for seeking them; the costly presents lavished upon him. In other words, without exactly saying so, Caesar gave Ariovistus to understand that he was behaving with the most despicable ingratitude. The second part was devoted to an examination of the relations

between the Romans and the Aedui. It reviewed the history of their 'alliance' and stressed the long years of 'friendship' which bound the two peoples together. It also dwelt upon the great tradition of Rome, who wished that her friends and allies should not only go unmolested but should ever increase their honour, wealth, and dignity. Finally Caesar ended by stating his conditions; that is to say, he repeated word for word those he had proposed in his last message to Ariovistus.

Then it was the German leader's turn to speak.

'Ariovistus had very little to say in reply to Caesar's demands, but he expatiated at length on his own merits.' This is the somewhat disdainful note we find in the *Commentaries*. Yet even in their brief and necessarily biased version the speech appears to have been very much to the point and suggests that Ariovistus, who unlike Caesar, had been obliged to improvise, must have had quite remarkable gifts for oratory and argument.

Caesar reproached him with ingratitude and emphasized the importance of the honours accorded to him. Ariovistus' reply, although totally devoid of any sentimentality, was at any rate perfectly clear. The friendship of the Romans should be of some advantage to him. This had been his reason for seeking it. If its only result was to remove those whom he considered as his subjects from his rule and to encourage his tributaries to neglect their obligations, he would be as ready to give it up as he had been to seek it. The Aedui were 'brothers and allies' of the Romans? He was 'neither enough of a barbarian nor enough out of touch with current events' to be unaware that the Aedui had helped the Romans as little in their last war against the Allobroges (61 B.C.) as the Romans had helped them in their conflict with the Sequani. Thereupon with brutal frankness he denounced the true nature of this so-called pact of friendship. Its only purpose was to enable Caesar to have an army in Gaul which he could hurl against the Germans whenever he pleased. Therein lay the central cause of their conflict, and he summed it up with luminous precision: 'Never until now had a Roman army crossed the frontiers of the Province. What did Caesar want from him that he came thus into his territory? This part of Gaul was his province, just as the other was Rome's. As they would have to stop him if he invaded Roman territory, so Rome was guilty of an injustice in entering his domain and interfering with the exercise of his rights.'

There followed a detailed examination of Caesar's conditions which

he considered excessive and unjustifiable. Caesar demanded that he should refrain from sending Germans into Gaul in large numbers. If he did so it was not to attack the country but to safeguard his own position. He had come there before the Romans. He had not crossed the Rhine on his own initiative but at the invitation of the Gauls. He had only come because they asked him, and he had only taken up arms in order to help them in a defensive war. As for the hostages whose restitution Caesar demanded, they had been given him freely by the Gauls. He was therefore under no obligation to account for them to Rome. And now, here was the proposal which he, leader of the Germans, made to Caesar, leader of the Romans :

‘If Caesar would depart from the country and leave the free disposal of it to him, he would prove his gratitude royally and would undertake to carry out all the wars Caesar might wish, without his being involved in any trouble or danger.’

This is how the *Commentaries* interpret this astounding offer with which according to them Ariovistus wound up his speech. To pay the price of non-intervention by Rome in the affairs of the Gauls and to have his hands free in their country, Ariovistus was apparently ready to become, as it were, a permanent war-tool in Caesar’s hands and to plunge himself and his people into military servitude for all time. In this way, Caesar only had to give the word and all the campaigns he pleased would be undertaken. The Germans would shoulder all the costs and perils while Caesar, without running any risks, would take the profits.

We refuse to believe that Ariovistus could have proposed to his adversary so incredible an arrangement by which he would saddle himself with such obvious disadvantages. It looks rather as though Caesar had somewhat altered the meaning of Ariovistus’ words in order to bring out his own disinterestedness and his willingness to sacrifice his personal glory for the greater good of the Republic. Nevertheless, he could not have invented all of it. There must have been some foundation for such a proposal. The speech probably contained an offer to form an alliance and share the zones of influence : western Europe going to Ariovistus and the rest of the world to Caesar.

Caesar replied with another speech. Avoiding the issue, he embarked on a lengthy exposition of the historical reasons which prevented the Romans from abandoning their ‘perfectly loyal allies’.

While Caesar was developing his arguments in leisurely fashion, the warriors of Ariovistus grew impatient. They considered that the



conference was going on too long. From afar they saw the figures of their master and 'the great foreign commander' outlined against the grey sky of an Alsatian September. This spectacle, however, was far from satisfying them. They no doubt thought that it was time to stop talking and pass on to action. Some among them, defying orders, crossed the line of demarcation and were approaching the site where the Romans were drawn up. The latter prepared to receive them in a fitting manner. At their threatening attitude the Germans hesitated and then turned round, but not before they had thrown a few arrows and a handful of stones at Caesar's soldiers. Caesar was immediately informed of the incident. Thereupon he stopped his speech, abruptly left the scene of the interview and hurried to join his troops which, at his orders, immediately returned to their camp.

This sudden decision of Caesar requires some explanation. In his reply Ariovistus had dropped certain significant hints which, although no revelation to Caesar, confirmed the suspicions he had had since the first days after his arrival in Gaul. In announcing his intention to treat Caesar as an enemy if he did not withdraw his troops from the territory over which he himself claimed to have rights, Ariovistus had added that should he cause Caesar to perish 'he would be fulfilling the wishes of many nobles and senators of Rome' that 'he knew it from their own lips', and that 'his death would earn their gratitude and friendship'. This was a clear avowal on the part of the Germanic leader that he was keeping in close touch with Caesar's enemies in Rome, and it was quite easy for Caesar to imagine, when he heard of the provocative gesture of the German cavalry, that the whole conference which Ariovistus had arranged was nothing but a deliberately planned trap. That was why, without a moment's hesitation, he cut the interview short and returned to join his troops. Once back in camp, he did not fail to exploit the incident as an open proof of the hostile intentions of the Germans. The army 'was roused to impatience and became more eager to fight'. That was exactly what was needed. The battle could begin at once. Yet, it did not.

The day drew quietly to a close. Throughout the following day the Germans remained quiet. Then on the second day Ariovistus sent a new deputation. It seemed obvious that he did not want to fight. In spite of the none too courteous treatment he had received from Caesar, he tried again to find a basis for agreement. He asked Caesar to fix the time for another interview. He declared that he would be ready to negotiate with one of his legates if Caesar did not want the

trouble of coming himself. This again seemed to prove that he was animated by a spirit of conciliation.

Meet Ariovistus again? Of course Caesar would not dream of such a thing; <sup>135</sup> but he did not even think it necessary to be represented by one of his officers. He merely sent his Gallic friend Valerius Procillus to hear the proposals of the German leader and to report them to him. A certain M. Mettius was to go with him. We know nothing of this individual except that he previously had occasion to stay at the court of Ariovistus. This was probably why Caesar selected him to accompany his emissary.

When, instead of seeing some important person arrive, Ariovistus beheld a young native of absolutely no account, followed by a compatriot who, if anything, evoked some rather unpleasant memories, he flew into a violent rage. 'He cried out in front of his soldiers: "Why have you come here? Is it to spy on me?" and without giving them time to offer an explanation he cast them into chains.' Such at any rate is the account Caesar has given of Ariovistus' reception of his envoys. We have no other evidence against which to check it. We can only accept what we read in the *Commentaries*, although it is in striking contradiction to the prudent and conciliatory attitude which Ariovistus had hitherto adopted.

Whatever may have happened, one thing is certain: Ariovistus gave immediate orders to strike camp and march against Caesar. Towards the end of the day, after covering about sixteen miles, his troops reached the foot of the Vosges. The Romans were only some three miles away. The next day Ariovistus commanded his army to make a clever move which Caesar was not expecting, threatening the Besançon road, by which the convoys of provisions reached the Roman camp. The fiery and impetuous warrior thus showed himself to be a prudent strategist. Instead of falling upon the enemy, he tried to cut off his supplies. Caesar, on the contrary, was visibly seeking to force a battle and seemed to have given up the tactics employed in his previous campaign. For five days running he ordered his legions to leave the camp and to draw up in battle array before the enemy. Ariovistus, however, persistently avoided all rash action and nothing happened beyond a few furtive and isolated blows struck by his cavalry.

Threatened from the rear, obliged to divide his forces so as to protect his lines of communication, foreseeing the bad weather which would hamper his movements by the end of September, and, above

all, fearing a lowering of his soldiers' morale which had been aroused at the cost of so much effort, Caesar decided to make the first move and gave orders to attack the camp of Ariovistus. Forced to fight, the German leader ordered his troops to leave the fortifications, and as soon as the Roman attack started he launched them against the oncoming enemy in a furious counter-attack. The shock of the encounter was terrible. After the strain of waiting, the adversaries rushed upon each other with the utmost fury. It was a savage struggle in which men threw away their weapons and took to tooth and nail, 'like wild beasts devouring each other', as Appian puts it.<sup>136</sup>

For a long time the battle raged, and to the end its result seemed to hang in the balance. Caesar's description implicitly admits as much: 'While the left flank of the Germans was broken and put to flight, on their right the massed enemy forces were pressing us hard.' What Caesar does not tell us, but what, further on, his text allows us to discern, is that he himself, while directing operations against this left flank, became so involved in the struggle that he temporarily lost contact with the sector where enemy pressure was strongest. It fell to P. Crassus, the younger of the two sons whom the triumvir had placed on Caesar's staff, to save the situation. He had just taken over the cavalry in the place of the 'very experienced' Considius, whose incompetence had been so signally demonstrated during the recent campaign against the Helvetii. This young worldling who up till now, sheltered by his father's vast wealth, had led the empty existence of an amiable idler in Rome, suddenly showed himself to be an energetic and effective commander, capable of taking the initiative if need be, and fearless of the responsibilities it entailed.

Stationed in the rear near the fortifications and waiting to go into action with his cavalry, Crassus followed the development of the battle with close attention. He noticed the weakening of the Roman right flank, and before it was too late, without waiting for Caesar's orders, on his own authority he sent the last reserves left in the camp to help the threatened sector.<sup>137</sup> This intervention seems to have played a decisive part in the issue of the battle, for immediately afterwards the German forces gave way, all along the line and beat a precipitate retreat. There followed a disorderly race towards the Rhine. Abandoning everything—women, children, and baggage—the Germans strove to reach the river, while the Roman cavalry, headed by Caesar, followed close on their heels. The mad cavalcade lasted more than three hours. There were at least twenty thousand Germans, but they

were so panic-stricken that they fled wildly before the four thousand mercenary soldiers who pursued them, while the legionaries were pillaging the deserted camp and putting all who were left there to the sword.<sup>138</sup> Thus the two wives of Ariovistus perished. One of his daughters was killed, the other was taken captive. As for himself, probably covered with wounds, he managed to get away, and with a few faithful followers reached the opposite bank. We have no information about his fate. We only know that he died soon afterwards.

Before leaving his camp, Ariovistus had given orders that Caesar's envoys, whom he held prisoners, should go with him. Loaded with a triple chain, they were dragged along in the general flight. On the way they were overtaken by the Romans, and it was Caesar himself who had the joy of setting his friend free by seizing him from the hands of his fugitive guards. 'This meeting caused him as much pleasure as the victory itself', Caesar assures us in his *Commentaries*.

## Conquest of Belgium

WHEN he offered to share the zones of influence with Caesar, Ariovistus had taken care to underline the fact that 'he had come into Gaul before the Romans', hoping thus to establish his right of priority over the coveted territory. Caesar replied that after the great victory of Rome over the Arverni and the Ruteni in 121—in other words, more than half a century before Ariovistus appeared on the scene in Gaul—the Romans had 'pardoned' the Gauls without reducing their country to the status of a province and without even imposing a tribute. 'The Senate', he added, 'had wished that though conquered by Rome it should retain its own laws.'

After having expelled the invader and made the country safe from all danger of Germanic invasion, Caesar, if he wished to act in conformity with the aforementioned decision of the Senate, should have withdrawn from this territory and taken his troops back into the Roman province. He did nothing of the sort. Although the season was not yet advanced enough, the legions received orders to take up their winter quarters in the region of Besançon, that is to say, right in the middle of the Sequanian country, which meant nothing more nor less than the completion of the military occupation of Celtic Gaul.

Soon Caesar's departure for Cisalpine Gaul was announced. This was an indication of the winter truce which was about to begin; it became clear that the Romans did not mean to extend their military operations beyond the conquered zone for the time being. Their intention, however, to establish themselves for good in the country they had come to 'protect' from the Germans became increasingly evident. The activities of Labienus, who had been entrusted with the command of the Roman troops during Caesar's absence, were not restricted to the mere occupation of the territory. They also took the form of a general control of the country's political life. The 'Roman' party was favoured and given every advantage, while those who had adopted an anti-Roman attitude were ruthlessly persecuted. Nevertheless it was not possible to wipe them out completely. Underground agitators, tracked down and hunted, still found a welcome among the

people. The more the Roman army seemed to be digging itself in, the more Gallic dissatisfaction increased. This feeling rose to a very marked degree when it was learnt in Celtic Gaul that the tribes of Belgic Gaul, who were still free, were organizing themselves for a common preventive action. They wanted to preserve their country from the Roman attack which was considered inevitable, and according to general opinion would take place as soon as the good weather set in. What passed at first as nothing but a vague rumour was soon confirmed by events. All the Belgae had met in general assembly and had decided amidst delirious enthusiasm to take up arms and to go to war in defence of their threatened liberty. The contingents promised by the confederates reached a total of three hundred thousand men. The supreme command was entrusted to the king of the Suessiones, Galba, apparently a man of great qualities, but of limited military experience.

Caesar heard about it from the agents whom he had taken care to plant throughout the countries he coveted. Labienus' message which reached him soon afterwards, without telling him anything new, only served to justify his fears and to confirm the information received. He needed this confirmation, however. It showed him that the time had come for him to act, and it had come sooner than he had expected.

His preparations began immediately. First of all he proceeded to build up his army. Cisalpine Gaul was again called upon to give him soldiers: a levy of two additional legions was imposed upon its territory. They were scarcely formed when he sent them into Transalpine Gaul under the leadership of his nephew Q. Pedius whom he had just taken on as a legate. This was at the end of March. In the course of the next month, 'as soon as it began to be possible to get fodder', he rejoined the army himself. He was anxious to supervise personally the concentration of provisions to which, as always, he attached great importance. At the same time he was pursuing his inquiries among the inhabitants of the border lands about the activities of his future adversaries. All the information he received agreed on one point: the men had been conscripted and the troops were being assembled.

As soon as he had secured his supplies of corn, Caesar struck camp and started in the direction of the frontier. He reached it in fifteen days at the head of an army about fifty thousand strong. Thus the campaign of the year 57 had virtually begun. It opened with a dramatic incident.

The Remi, whose territory would have been the first to be invaded, hearing that Caesar had appeared in the neighbourhood of the Marne, which formed the boundary of their country, sent their war leader Iccius to meet him. He was 'a man of high birth and held in great esteem by his people'. With him came another important though rather taciturn personage. They came to offer Caesar the complete submission of their tribe. They placed themselves and all they possessed under his protection. They dissociated themselves from the other Belgae. They were prepared to open their fortresses to him, to provide him with corn and any other payments in kind that he might demand, to obey his orders and to give him hostages, of which he himself was to fix the number.

Historians have expressed a variety of views concerning the policy adopted by this free people who of their own accord gave up their independence, and without making even a show of resistance, threw themselves unreservedly upon the mercy of the invader. Some have used the words cowardice or treason, others have called it prudence or even religious resignation. On closer examination we see in it the result of calculations, no doubt selfish but perfectly correct, based on a recent and convincing enough example. In the general confederation of the Belgae these remote ancestors of the present natives of Champagne did not play the part to which they thought they were entitled by virtue of the importance of their land, the prosperity of their State, and the natural resources of their country. They formed a sort of united kingdom with the Suessiones, but from all accounts the leadership was not theirs and we might safely say that their union was far from being harmonious. The question of the attitude to be adopted in the anti-Roman campaign which was in preparation made the rift between them final. The Remi, whose geographical position exposed them to receive the first blows of the enemy attack, inclined towards peace; the Suessiones, on the contrary, were eager for war. Antagonism had reached such proportions that the Remi, feeling themselves in the minority and having lost all hope that their pacifist policy might gain the day, kept away from the general assembly which had just met. Their position did not, however, allow them to remain in a state of absolute neutrality. They had to take sides one way or the other, and since they had dissociated themselves from their compatriots, all that remained for them was to turn to the Romans. Moreover, in doing so they might expect some very useful compensations. The example of the Aedui, whose attachment to the

Roman cause had been fully and completely rewarded, was not forgotten in their calculations. They imagined that, in surrendering to Rome, they might finally play the same part among the Belgae as the Aedui did in Celtic Gaul ; and in this respect their ambitions coincided perfectly with the political aims of Caesar, whose tendency was to support the military action of his legions by the disintegrating action of a people under his orders inside the country. He saw in Iccius the worthy emulator of Divitiacus. Like him, the leader of the Remi was going to become a faithful agent who would carry out his wishes. Caesar spoke to him 'with kindness' and readily accepted his offer of submission. He did not omit, however, to take his precautions, claiming important hostages, among them the children of all the leading Remi. As for Iccius, he was given a responsible military command. This shattered his last hope of keeping his people out of the war. To start with, the Remi were told that they had to guarantee the defence of their own towns. They received no reinforcements from Caesar, for he did not wish to weaken his forces just as he was about to engage in battle with the powerful Belgic army.<sup>139</sup>

The war burst open like a ripe fruit. The Belgae, infuriated by the defection of the Remi, invaded their country, sacking and burning down every village and place of habitation they passed. In a few days they reached the capital, Bibrax,<sup>140</sup> and laid siege to it. The assault began at once. Stones and arrows rained down on the ramparts. The town only resisted with great difficulty. Night fell bringing a little respite, and Iccius managed to send a desperate message to Caesar imploring his help, for, he said, 'if no one came to his assistance he could not hold out long'.

During this time Caesar was completing his own strategic arrangements. After crossing the Aisne and entering the territory of the Remi, he fortified one side of his camp which was bounded by the river. This gave work to his legionaries who once more changed their rôle for the occasion and became diggers. His plan was to divide the enemy's strength, and by creating several fronts to avoid fighting the whole of the formidable mass of humanity which the confederates had succeeded in lining up against him. Iccius with his Remi already held a part round Bibrax, but that was not enough. The powerful army of the Bellovaci—sixty thousand men who together with fifty thousand Nervii formed the corner-stone of the military system of his opponents—had to be separated from the main



body of troops. To achieve this he used the contingents provided once more by his 'friends and allies' the Aedui who, after cherishing fond hopes of peace and quiet 'under the shadow of the Roman sword' (I borrow this phrase from J. Carcopino), found themselves at war for the third time in the space of eighteen months. Divitiacus was accordingly summoned to Caesar's headquarters. There, 'in urgent terms' his master gave him to understand that it was in the 'essential interests' of Rome that the Aedui should attack the Bellovaci by penetrating into their country. This invasion would oblige them to withdraw their troops from the main front in order to go and protect their territory which had been left undefended. Furnished with the necessary instructions Divitiacus was dismissed, as the *Commentaries* record with exquisite brevity. He returned to his country to call his compatriots to arms.

As for Iccius, he received his reinforcements. Here again we notice Caesar's evident desire to save his legions. It was foreign mercenaries—Numidians, Cretans, Balears—whom he sent to help the Remi. Anyhow, their appearance encouraged the defenders of the town to an appreciable degree. As for the besiegers, they doubtless thought that Roman troops in considerable numbers had come to join in the struggle on the side of the Remi, and despairing of success under these conditions, they preferred to raise the siege and to go straight on to Caesar's camp. They arrived when the fortifications which he had been building were already completed.

The Belgae pitched their camp on a vast plain opposite Caesar's. A marsh separated the adversaries. Neither side took the initiative of attack. Caesar merely harassed the enemy with a few cavalry sorties, and the Belgae tried to get in behind the Roman troops so as to cut them off from their supplies. This attempt failed and the Belgic detachments which took part in it had to withdraw, leaving numerous dead on the banks and in the bed of the river.

This engagement, though a mere incident, had rather serious consequences. The campaign began under unfavourable conditions as far as the Belgae were concerned. It was impossible for them to force the enemy into action and this meant a prolongation of the war, which was costing them a great deal. They had about three hundred thousand men to feed in a country which had been thoroughly ravaged and in which all sources of supply had apparently been exhausted, while Caesar had convoys of provisions, sent him more or less voluntarily by 'friendly and allied tribes', streaming in from all

sides. Then, on top of it all, news reached the Belgic camp that the troops of the Aedui led by Divitiacus were drawing near the land of the Bellovaci ! This threw the latter into a state of great agitation. It seemed to them to be out of the question to go on waging war in a foreign land while their own territory was threatened with imminent invasion. All the leaders of the coalition were called together for an emergency council. The Bellovaci announced that they had quite decided to return to their country immediately ; the others, doubtless following the same line of argument, considered it useless to wait any longer far from their undefended homes, and agreed that it would be better to fight the enemy on their own ground, provided they all helped the one who was attacked first.

Having made this decision they left the camp that same night, ' amidst great disorder and tumult, with neither method nor discipline, each one wanting to be first on the way back, impatient to get home '.

Caesar did not fail to make the most of this opportunity. He sent three legions and all his cavalry in pursuit of the Belgae. Their rear-guard tried to offer resistance, but the main army only hastened its flight. ' So it came about ', wrote Caesar, ' that without running any danger our soldiers massacred as many of them as the length of the day permitted. After which, obedient to their orders, they returned to camp at sunset.

It was not until the next day that Caesar started on the march with all his army. Now he was going to reap the advantage of his tactics and to attack the enemy in successive sections. The Suessiones were the first. Their country bordered on the territory of the Remi, where he was at present. He accordingly marched in the direction of their capital, Noviodunum, which was supposed to be rather strongly fortified. He arrived there before Galba's fugitives and wanted to take it by storm immediately, trusting to his informers who had assured him that the town was completely undefended. This time they turned out to be wrong. Before starting on his campaign, Galba had left a small garrison at Noviodunum. From behind their walls and ditches they succeeded in repulsing the Roman attack. In the meantime the Suessionian army appeared. Caesar allowed it time to penetrate into the fortified enclosure of the capital ; then he gave orders to begin the siege. It was his first siege. He came out of it magnificently ; or rather his technical experts did, whose names he has passed in silence. In less than twenty-four hours a fortified camp was established, the place was surrounded, earthworks were erected,

and the inhabitants, after a night of anguish, saw, ranged threateningly in front of their city walls, monstrous machines which seemed to have risen out of the ground by some sort of a miracle. 'Struck by the immensity of these constructions, of which they had never seen the like and of which they had never even heard tell', they sent word to Caesar that they surrendered to him.

He had planned to make them suffer the rigorous fate which he habitually meted out to those he vanquished, but yielding to the pleas of the Remi who intervened in favour of their former allies, he had mercy on them. However, the Suessiones were obliged to give important hostages, among others the two sons of King Galba, and to surrender all the arms that were to be found in the city.

The first phase of the campaign against the Belgae was finished. The principal member of the anti-Roman coalition, the one that had organized and directed its resistance, had capitulated within twenty-four hours. The turn of the Bellovaci came next.

We have seen them starting off to defend their land from a threatened invasion. On their return they found themselves confronted with a totally unexpected situation. Divitiacus had obeyed Caesar's orders and arrived in their country at the head of his troops, but instead of fighting he preferred to negotiate. He must have been acquainted with some of the leaders who had stayed at home and taken no part in the expedition. He cleverly argued his case, and succeeded in proving to them that they had no interest in waging a war conducted by their rivals the Suessiones, people who, far from being capable of directing combined offensive operations, did not even know how to protect their own territory. He managed to convince them that they must get rid of the warmongering leaders who had dragged them into this adventure, and that they must offer their submission to Caesar.

We have no precise account of what happened among the Bellovaci when their troops returned. There must have been a conflict between those who wished to capitulate and the chiefs of the war party, and we have every reason to believe that the former won. At any rate we know that, finally, those who were considered responsible for having provoked a war against Rome, 'realizing the extent of the harm they had done their country', were obliged to go into exile and to seek refuge on the other side of the Channel. After that, the councillors' only concern was to go and offer their submission to Caesar, who had not waited for the end of these discussions before

entering their country and was already on his way towards their capital Bratuspantium<sup>141</sup> (perhaps the modern Beauvais). On learning of his approach, the most distinguished citizens went in a body to meet him. The interview took place at about five miles from the town. They informed the proconsul that their people 'placed themselves at his disposal and would not engage in any struggle with Rome'. Caesar took note of their declaration but continued to advance. When he reached the walls of the capital he pitched his camp, thus showing his intention to treat Bratuspantium as an enemy town deserving to endure all the consequences of the operations he proposed to carry out. Whereupon, Caesar tells us, 'the women and children from the top of the walls, their arms stretched out and their hands open in the usual gesture of supplication, begged the Romans for peace'. This touching demonstration does not seem to have affected his decision. It remained for the clever and insinuating Divitiacus to intervene in their favour. He had fulfilled his mission and brought his troops back. Now he returned to his master's side. He recalled 'the ancient alliance and friendship which at all times had united the Bellovaci and the Aedui', and he stressed the goodwill they had shown by disowning their guilty leaders. He proved to Caesar that by treating them 'with the generosity and kindness inherent in his nature' he would increase the prestige of the Aeduan government in the eyes of all the Belgae, who would thus see that in it they would have the best of advocates to plead their cause with the conqueror.

These arguments finally convinced Caesar. 'For the sake of the prestige of Divitiacus and the Aedui' he consented to accept the submission of the Bellovaci and to spare their town. He demanded, however, the surrender of all arms and the handing over of six hundred hostages. This was an exceptionally high figure, as he realized himself, but was justified by the fact that 'their city enjoyed great influence among the Belgic towns and had the largest population'.

Thus with a minimum expenditure of time and effort Caesar had succeeded in putting two of his most powerful opponents out of action. The third and last, considered as particularly formidable, still remained: the Nervii. They were 'rugged men and terrific fighters', who passed for 'the fiercest of all the Belgae'. Their attitude in the face of the peril which threatened them was quite different. They had heard of the defection of the Bellovaci and the Suessiones, and their anger was boundless. 'They covered them with bitter abuse for

having surrendered to Rome and for having trampled under foot the honour of their ancestors.' As for themselves they solemnly proclaimed that under no circumstances would they send their ambassadors to Caesar, or accept any offer of peace from him.

They accordingly prepared for the struggle. They appealed to all the former members of the coalition,<sup>142</sup> reminding them of the agreement which existed at the time of the disruption of their armies. Their neighbours the Atrebates of Artois and the Viromandui of Vermandois, faithful to their engagement, immediately sent contingents. The Aduatuci of the region of Namur promised to follow suit. The others preferred to stay neutral: the Morini of Boulonnais, the Menapii of the low country of Flanders and Brabant, the Veluocasses of Vexin. The Ambiani of the Amiens country, situated between the Bellovaci and the Nervii, surrendered to Caesar as soon as he appeared on their territory.

On hearing of the advance of the Roman legions the Nervii hastily evacuated all non-combatants—women, children, and old men—and took up their position on the right bank of the Sambre with the Viromandui and Atrebates on their flanks, numbering some 80,000 men all told.

After a three-day march across the land of the Nervii, Caesar reached the left bank of the river and decided to pitch his camp there. In the meantime his cavalry had orders to harass the enemy and to prevent them from interfering in any way with the completion of the work in progress.

It was here that Caesar made a grave mistake; he had not foreseen that when operating on ground scattered with every imaginable obstacle accumulated by the Nervii in anticipation of his attack, his horsemen would meet with endless difficulties and would be an easy prey for the enemy. That was exactly what happened. The Nervii, who had barricaded themselves in the woods which covered the hill dominating the right bank of the Sambre, allowed Caesar's cavalry to cross the river and to reach the edge of the forest.<sup>143</sup> Then, leaving their ambush, they flung themselves upon their victims with irresistible fury, overwhelmed them, crushed them, and 'with incredible rapidity' (as Caesar himself admits) crossed the river and climbed out on the other side. Without slackening their pace, this formidable torrent of eighty thousand men poured over the hill of which the upper part had been chosen as the site for Caesar's camp. The work of establishing it was still in progress and the legionaries, who had put aside their

helmets and bucklers, and exchanged their swords for spades and hammers, were labouring at their manual tasks. The sudden appearance of the Nervii caused an indescribable tumult. In a panic of complete bewilderment, the soldiers knew neither what to do nor whom to obey. They did not even have time to put on their helmets or get their bucklers out of their covers. Already in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle they had to free themselves from his grip.

The fighting started in utter confusion, but little by little resistance became organized. The legionaries grouped themselves as well as they could wherever they happened to be when the avalanche surprised them. There was no question of joining their respective units. Finally the battle formed itself into three sectors in which each legion was struggling on its own, without any liaison between them. This resulted in some paradoxical situations. The Tenth Legion, the élite among Caesar's troops, found itself on the left flank, together with the Ninth Legion which was also made up of tried veterans, but all they had to contend with was the small and ineffective enemy force of the Atrebatas. In the centre, two good legions, the Eighth and the Eleventh, were face to face with the second-rate contingents sent by the Viromandui. The right flank, however, formed by the Seventh and Twelfth Legions—the latter composed of inexperienced recruits—was in a very difficult position. It had to bear the onslaught of fifty thousand Nervii. The young soldiers of the Twelfth gave way fairly quickly and were surrounded. The enemy penetrated inside the camp. Then the auxiliary troops in charge of the baggage were taken with wild panic. The foreign mercenaries and the horsemen, given to Caesar by the Treveri as a result of the treaties made with their cities, set the example of headlong flight.

During these critical moments Caesar, who seems to have been taken completely by surprise, gave proof of remarkable presence of mind and energy. The traditional rules of military science at the time demanded a certain number of preliminary actions when a battle was about to open: the commander-in-chief had to line up his troops in fighting formation, harangue them, give the order to attack. . . . The sudden irruption of the enemy had made it impossible for Caesar to carry out these formalities in the approved manner. His first impulse was to go with all speed to encourage his soldiers in their resistance. He rushed off at random, without even waiting for someone to bring his shield. The first legion he came upon was that of Labienus, his favourite Tenth. He contented himself with addressing

a few brief words to the soldiers, asking them 'to remember their ancient valour, to keep calm and to stand firm before the assault'.

Caesar visited all his legions in this way, going from one to the other and bringing inspiration and encouragement to all. Finally he came to the Twelfth. Here he beheld a pitiful spectacle. We will leave him to describe it himself:

The soldiers of the Twelfth Legion, having gathered their standards into one place, were so crowded together that they got in each other's way for fighting: the fourth cohort had had all its centurions and a standard-bearer killed; they had lost a standard, and in the other cohorts nearly all the centurions were wounded or slain . . . the rest were weakening, and in the hindermost ranks a certain number of them, feeling that they had been abandoned, were leaving the battle and seeking to escape from the blows.

Groups of these fugitives were the first he met on reaching the sector defended by the Twelfth Legion. Intuitively Caesar knew at once what gesture the circumstances demanded of him: he snatched the shield from one of these wretches<sup>144</sup> and pushed through the human mass which blocked his way right into the front line. Once there, calm and resolute, as though it was merely a matter of reviewing his troops, he proceeded to call out the names of the centurions (he knew them all by name). The blood-stained procession began: they all came, some still quivering with the sacred fury of battle and some white and haggard, scarcely able to stand upright, on the point of succumbing, while a grim silence replied for those who could no longer hear. To each one a task was allotted. The order was given to open the ranks so that the soldiers could use their swords, and the Seventh Legion which had fought on in isolation after the front had broken was called to join up with the Twelfth.

These measures stopped the flight. The soldiers took heart once more. The situation remained critical, however, as the enemy had passed the main lines of defence and had succeeded in encircling the Twelfth Legion. Caesar, cut off from the rest of his army, was in great danger of becoming a prisoner of the Nervii. For once the panic-stricken fugitives in the rear helped to save him.

Caesar's nephew, who with two legions was escorting convoys of provisions and munitions to the Roman camp, met these terrified crowds of slaves and servants as they ran away, crying out that all

was lost. He immediately regrouped his men and flung them post-haste into the struggle to rescue his uncle. Labienus, who had repulsed the enemy and in the course of a counter-attack was already climbing the hill which sheltered the camp of the Nervii beyond the Sambre, also became aware of Caesar's difficult position. Returning at once, he attacked the Nervii from the rear while the two legions of Pedius came upon them from both sides.

Surrounded in their turn, the Nervii defended themselves with a superhuman heroism, to which Caesar himself could not but pay tribute :

Then, when scarcely any hope was left them, the enemy showed such courage that, as the first fell, those who followed stood on their bodies to fight, and when they fell in their turn and the corpses were piling up, the survivors as from the top of a hillock threw arrows at our soldiers and hurled back the javelins which had missed their mark.

This picture is impressive, and we cannot doubt its authenticity. We hesitate to believe, however, that it included the entire army of the Nervii. It seems more likely that this was the fate which one determined unit had accepted with heroic resignation. The others managed to get away, although no doubt in a sad enough state, and returned to their country. Caesar tells us that 'this battle reduced the nation of the Nervii almost to nothing'. He bases himself on the statement made by the delegates whom the evacuated population sent him when offering their submission. The figures they gave seemed purposely to exaggerate the number of victims and the extent of the misfortune which had befallen them. According to them, out of six hundred councillors there only remained three, and out of sixty thousand able-bodied men, scarcely five hundred. Caesar accepted these figures without a moment's hesitation.<sup>145</sup> Yet, even if we could bring ourselves to admit the possibility of the simultaneous massacre of fifty-nine thousand five hundred Nervian warriors in the course of the battle, we look in vain for any reason which could have caused the death of five hundred and ninety-seven councillors, who were excluded from the ranks of the combatants by their age and station. Another argument has been brought forward in support of these findings. It has been pointed out that since in 52 the Nervii were able to send Vercingetorix a contingent of six thousand men, their nation cannot have been completely wiped out in 57. This



reasoning does not strike me as very convincing. In the space of five years, the adolescents, who were included among the evacuated non-combatants in 57, had had time to reach the age of military service. In other words, regardless of the number of survivors in the battle of the Sambre, the Nervii should have had enough manpower in 52 to enable them to fulfil their obligations as participants in the great struggle for liberation which we shall describe later on.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that Caesar had more consideration for the Nervii, who had fought against him so stubbornly, than for the Bellovaci and the Suessiones who had given up after a short-lived resistance. 'He left them to enjoy their land and their towns and ordered their neighbours to respect their persons and their possessions and to make them respected.' This is what Caesar says in his *Commentaries*.

The Aduatuci, who had promised to help the Nervii, arrived on the scene when the battle was at its height. Then an astounding thing happened, which clearly shows how fragile the bonds were between these different tribes who lived together, often enough as foreigners if not as enemies. As soon as they heard that the battle had started, they turned round and went home !

There is no doubt that the intervention of these twenty thousand men would have effectively counter-balanced the Roman reserves which were brought up at the last minute, and might have radically changed the situation, thereby bringing within the range of possibility a Nervian victory with incalculable results.

How can their conduct be explained ? It was not just cowardice on their part. These people were hardened warriors, the descendants of the Cimbrians and the Teutons. They were aggressive and bellicose men of gigantic stature who terrorized their neighbours. They did not fear battle and looked down upon the Romans from their superior height with disdainful condescension, but they preferred to fight at home, on their own soil, defending their own possessions. That is why, as soon as they returned, far from showing signs of discouragement, they at once began to organize their resistance and to prepare for the struggle. Leaving their towns and villages, they concentrated all their available reserves and gathered all their wealth in one place which was considered to be impregnable and which, as Camille Jullian has shown, probably corresponds to the present citadel of Namur.<sup>146</sup> Unaware of the perfection which the Romans had reached in the art of siege, they thought they were completely secure behind an

earthwork which extended for nearly three miles and was reinforced by numerous redoubts. From behind their ramparts they watched the Roman legionaries who were constructing a big tower some distance away, and they jeered at these little men 'who set out to place a tower of such weight on the wall'. Then one day, a marvel greeted their terrified eyes. The gigantic tower, resting on its platform, was set in motion, and controlled by invisible powers, began to advance towards their walls. Greatly affected by this extraordinary spectacle so absolutely outside the realm of their experience, they came to the conclusion that the gods were helping the Romans in their war and that under these conditions it was useless to resist them. They accordingly sent messengers to Caesar offering their submission. They only made one humble request: that Caesar would not deprive them of their arms. 'Nearly all their neighbours detested them and were jealous of their bravery. If they gave up their arms they would be unable to defend themselves.'

Caesar, who had heard this kind of supplication often enough, showed himself inexorable and replied 'that there could be no possible surrender if their arms were not given up'. As for their neighbours, the Aduatuci had no cause to worry. He would inform them 'that it was strictly forbidden to injure any people who had submitted to Rome'. These were the words of a master sure of his power and authority. The Aduatuci yielded. A large quantity of arms was heaped up on the ramparts and thrown from the top of the wall into the ditch which ran round their town.

As though he wished to give them proof of his satisfaction, Caesar ordered those of his soldiers who had penetrated into the town to leave it at nightfall, on the grounds that they would thus be prevented from committing any acts of violence against the inhabitants under cover of darkness. At any rate that was how the Aduatuci understood it. Therefore, imagining that the Romans, reassured by the spectacular surrender of arms which they had just witnessed, had relaxed their watch, they took the weapons they had withheld out of their hiding-places, and towards two o'clock in the morning entered the Roman camp, which appeared to be plunged in deepest slumber. Caesar's soldiers, however, were not asleep. He had foreseen this danger and given the necessary orders. Immediately, torches shone out everywhere and the threatened points were manned. After a brief but bloody battle the Aduatuci were driven back into their city. At day-break the gates of the citadel were forced open and the legionaries

entered once more. There was no massacre, or scarcely any. All able-bodied men were dragged into a camp which was there and then transformed into an improvised slave market. All this human cattle was sold by auction in one lot. No one even troubled to count them. It was only later that Caesar was told by the buyers that the number of heads [*sic*] was 53,000.

The campaign was drawing to an end. There was nothing left but to await news of P. Crassus who had been sent at the head of a single legion, the Seventh, to subdue the sea-faring peoples of Normandy, Armorica, Maine, and Anjou, while the unlucky adventure of the Aduatuci was being settled.<sup>147</sup> Caesar had not considered it necessary to go in person to subjugate these remote and unknown lands; they doubtless did not amount to much in his eyes; a young legate would be enough to deal with them. As a matter of fact, it turned out to be what to-day is known as a walk-over. All the way from Namur to Angers Crassus did not meet with the slightest resistance. Deputations were waiting for him wherever he passed in order to offer him the submission of their towns, boroughs, and villages. The 'attack of fear and cowardice' from which Gaul was suffering at the time had spread right up to the Atlantic Ocean, and at the mere mention of Caesar's name the Normans of Séez and Cotentin and the Bretons of the region around Rennes trembled with fear. For these primitive people he had become a sort of awe-inspiring divinity whom it would be vain to resist, and his young representative benefited by his master's terrible prestige. Soon afterwards he reported to his chief with pride and brevity: The Veneti, Venelli, Osismi, Curiosolites, Esuvii, Aulerci, Redones—all of them seafaring tribes living near the Ocean—are subdued by the power of Rome.

Now the time had come to deal with the political and economic organization of this multitude of nations which in the space of a few months had been incorporated in the domain of the Republic. Caesar proceeded with remarkable method and achieved considerable results in a very brief space of time. This work has remained almost unknown, as he himself did not consider it worth while to expatiate upon it. From what we know of its results, however, we are able to recognize a system of great ingenuity, which only needed the goodwill of the subjects in order to produce all the advantages anticipated by the rulers. In each political district the various tribes were grouped round a leader-nation which served them as a guide and model: the Aedui for Celtic, the Remi for Belgic Gaul. Within each tribe a new

## CONQUEST OF BELGIUM

political order was constituted. The oligarchical principle as exemplified in the Roman Republic was replaced by the monarchical principle, which centralized all power in the hands of a king chosen directly by Caesar or with his approval. In this way the government was systematically purged, not only of the declared enemies of Rome, but also of the 'lukewarm elements', those who remained neutral and tried to survive without taking a definite line for the moment. The municipal administration and all economic problems were handled by the local authorities, but the directives were previously given at a general assembly held annually under Caesar's presidency. The deliberations at these councils were mainly concerned with the quarters for the occupation troops and the payments due to the conqueror.

Caesar of course took good care to publish his victories as widely as possible in Rome and to stress the advantages resulting from them. When the citizens saw the interminable processions of slaves streaming in, when they learned of the arrival of convoys laden with booty, when they heard the strange sounding names of hitherto unknown peoples now under Roman domination, they realized that great deeds had been accomplished in those far distant lands—deeds which had extended the sway of the Republic over the vast regions of a new empire. Then a wave of admiration and gratitude surged up towards the man who had achieved this miracle, and the Senate was obliged to bestow upon him the victor's highest recompense: public thanksgivings in his honour. Moreover, to underline the unique character of Caesar's exploits, the number of days allotted was increased to fifteen, instead of the ten which his predecessor Pompey had been accorded—and it was Cicero who undertook to put the vote through.

*The Lucca Interlude*

As might have been expected, Cicero had shown little inclination to resign himself meekly to the severe fate which had struck him. He had scarcely been in exile for two months before he began working with all possible energy to obtain his recall. He used every means in his power, appealed for help to his relatives, friends and clients, in short to everyone whom he judged capable of advancing his cause. Result: the tribune L. Ninnius Quadratus proposed during the session of June 1, 58, that he should be recalled, and the Senate voted unanimously for his return. Thereupon another tribune, Aelius Ligus, made use of his right of *intercessio* to oppose it and everything had to begin all over again.

While this was going on, Cicero's youngest brother Quintus returned to Rome from the province of Africa which he had been governing for three years. This puny and embittered man was about four years younger than his illustrious brother and lived in the shadow of his brilliant reputation. We know, moreover, that he was deeply attached to him. Therefore he left nothing undone which might help him. He went to see Pompey, who appeared to hesitate, making Quintus understand that it depended very much on Caesar's goodwill, and that he could not undertake anything without having first consulted the proconsul of Gaul. Apprised by Pompey, Caesar did not hurry to reply. Cicero, kept informed of all that was going on, was in despair. Soon, however, there was a ray of hope to cheer him. One of his former agents, P. Sestius, elected tribune for the following year, went personally, most probably at the request of his ex-employer, to see Caesar who was then in Cisalpine Gaul. This step did not produce any definite results either, but certain conditions must have been proposed by Caesar whose subsequent attitude was to depend upon their acceptance. This is the only possible explanation of another visit which Quintus paid forthwith to Pompey with the object of notifying him that his brother pledged himself to work for Caesar. The declaration seems to have smoothed away all difficulties. This time Caesar made it known that he was in no way opposed to Cicero's

recall from exile. Pompey undertook all the necessary legal steps, and on the following August 4 the decree authorizing Cicero's return was passed. Exactly a month later, on September 4, he made his reappearance in the Forum.<sup>148</sup>

He hardly had time to enjoy the first days of his return before he was obliged to think about fulfilling the obligations he had accepted. Thus it came about that during the second half of September he probably caused some surprise among his colleagues by delivering an eloquent appeal in support of the exceptional thanksgivings to honour the conqueror of Gaul. That was only a beginning. Caesar demanded a high price for the favour he had granted him. He had laid a bill before the Senate requesting supplementary wages for the legionaries whom he had engaged at his own expense and whom he paid with booty taken from the conquered towns. Once more it was Cicero's task to get it passed. 'Not only did I vote for Caesar,' he said later concerning this matter, 'but I left no stone unturned to get my opinion adopted by the Senate; I refuted all objections, and I helped to draw up the decree.' This, however, was not enough for Caesar. He demanded that the number of his legates should be brought up to ten. Again it was Cicero who had to silence the murmurs of opposition and to convince his colleagues that in pleasing Caesar they were acting for the good of the Republic.

He seems to have adapted himself very well to this sudden change-over and to have found it quite natural. It was not until the beginning of 56 that things went wrong. In March of that year Cicero had agreed to defend his faithful P. Sestius, accused of corruption in elections and of violence. The tribune Vatinius, who was called as a witness, took this opportunity to address some rather scathing remarks to the counsel for the defence. He suggested, among other things, that 'it was Caesar's fortune and success that had won his friendship'. Cicero, cut to the quick, replied that 'the position of Bibulus, unfortunate as it was, appeared to him preferable to all the triumphs and victories of others', and he reminded his interlocutor that 'the men who had imprisoned Bibulus in his house were the same who had driven him, Cicero, from his own'.

A few days later Cicero committed a more serious blunder. We have already seen that Caesar's enemies had in no way given up their intrigues and were persistently seeking every possible opportunity of harming him during his absence. They remained unmoved by the glowing reports of victories with which he flooded the capital after

each military success. Tirelessly they pursued their object. At the moment they were striving to force the Senate to annul the laws introduced by Caesar during his consulship, particularly the agrarian law. These they considered to be illegal, as they had been promulgated in violation of the prescribed rules of the constitution. They had already raised the question towards the end of 57, but without success : it seemed premature to attack Caesar when the Senate had just voted that he should be rewarded with exceptional honours. Weeks passed by. They lengthened into months. Spring brought a difficult economic situation : provisions were short, the people were clamouring for bread, they had to be fed in order to calm their discontent, but the crops had failed. Meanwhile the fertile Campagna was given away in small lots as a result of Caesar's agrarian law. His enemies considered that the moment had come to renew their attack. At the session of April 5 the problem of the *ager campanus* was brought up once more. This gave rise to tumultuous excitement. According to Cicero, 'they shouted almost as loud as in the Forum'. Caesar's partisans wanted to go on evading the issue, but the opposing party held out and energetically demanded a discussion. A motion was presented and adopted, fixing one for May 15. Its sponsor was Cicero. This gesture was interpreted as amounting to a declaration of war on Caesar. While waiting for 'the opening of hostilities', Pompey, who had virtually become a dictator in the matter of the city's food supplies, was neutralized by a credit of forty million sesterces for the purchase of wheat.

Another equally disquieting event took place almost simultaneously. One of Caesar's sworn enemies, the ex-praetor L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, who had vainly tried to bring an accusation against him at the end of his consulship, announced his intention of seeking election as a consul himself for the next year, and pledged that as soon as he assumed office 'he would obtain what as praetor he had never succeeded in obtaining'. He determined, further, to deprive Caesar of his military command even before his present appointment expired.

Pompey seems to have been a passive spectator at this drawing of swords. Actually, in his secret heart, he was not altogether displeased to see so many difficulties arising in the path of his associate. His own agents as well as Caesar's never tired of vaunting the perfect unity of outlook, the indissoluble friendship which bound them to each other. But that did not prevent Pompey from thinking that Caesar was making a little too much publicity for himself. The reports of

military operations which were reaching the Senate seemed to him unduly exaggerated and he had even been heard to voice the opinion that their publication was misleading the public. This reserved attitude did not fail to attract the attention of Caesar's enemies, who tried various ways of sounding Pompey with a view to causing a break between the two allies. The trouble was that they went about it very clumsily. Some well-meaning advisers urged him to send away his young wife, a step which would have effectively detached him from his father-in-law, but he was too fond of his Julia and indignantly rejected the idea—all the while continuing to rejoice in secret every time he heard of new plots against her father.

Crassus was watching this development with a certain apprehension. It was not that he had any great affection for Caesar, but at the moment it was very much in his interest that his associate's authority should not be diminished. He also cherished some bold schemes of his own, but the time for their realization was not yet ripe. Meanwhile his two sons were learning the art of leadership under Caesar's guidance. It would never do for political complications to interfere with their career, particularly with that of the younger one who had shown such brilliant promise.

Having established his legions in their winter quarters, Caesar had gone on a tour of inspection to Cisalpine Gaul, as he had done the previous year. He only stayed there a very short time. He wanted to push on farther and to visit his third province: up till now he had rather neglected the distant Illyricum. He made a fairly long stay there,<sup>149</sup> but we have no information whatever on this subject, and it was not until the beginning of April 56 that he decided to return to Gaul.

When Crassus learnt of Caesar's expected arrival, he went to meet him at Ravenna. He gave his associate an account of the situation: the intrigues of his enemies, the threats of Domitius, the blunders of Cicero and the ambiguous attitude of Pompey.

Caesar acted promptly. An explanatory discussion with Pompey must come first. The latter was on the point of embarking for Sardinia to take up the duties of his new appointment. Caesar asked him to come out of his way a little so as to pass through Lucca. This was at the extreme limit of his own province and he would wait for him there. Pompey accepted.

News that the glorious conqueror of Gaul was proposing to stop for a few days in this small city relatively near the capital caused great



excitement in political circles. Magistrates of various ranks, business men, women of the world and many others flocked there to get a glimpse of him. 'One might see before Caesar's doors the *fascēs* of as many as a hundred and twenty proconsuls and praetors', writes Plutarch and he estimates that there were about two hundred senators who had taken the trouble to go in person to pay homage to the man whom they already guessed would one day shape the destiny of the Roman Republic.

Caesar received some, snubbed others, and spent most of his time in conference with his two associates. He did not fail to draw Pompey's attention both to Cicero's provocative attitude and to the undesirability of allowing the validity of his legislative acts to become a subject of debate in the Senate. They agreed that such a discussion must be prevented, and Pompey consented to make their decision known to Cicero, who would be told to take the necessary steps for its cancellation. It was further agreed that in order to block the way for Domitius and to prevent him carrying out his threats, Crassus and Pompey should both stand for election as consuls the following year. Once elected, they would prolong the powers of the proconsul of Gaul and assign whatever provinces they chose to themselves.

The agreement concluded, Caesar took leave of everybody and started once more for the country where the call of arms was sounding.

Pompey left Lucca in a very bad humour. He was particularly annoyed with Cicero, whose carelessness had caused Caesar's displeasure to light upon his own head. When he reached Sardinia he called Quintus, who in the meantime had become one of his legates and whom he had put in charge of the provisioning of the island. He began by loading him with reproaches. His brother was an ungrateful wretch! He did not fulfil his engagements! What was he up to in the Senate? Cicero must avoid every sign which could be interpreted as unfavourable to Caesar. Finally he gave him warning, 'If you do not hurry to bring Marcus to reason, I will hold you personally responsible for the promises you have made me in his name.'

Quintus promised to do what he could and wrote to his brother, but Pompey did not leave it at that. On his own account, and probably in accordance with Caesar's formal instructions, he informed Cicero through one of his collaborators that the debate fixed for May 15 must be cancelled at all costs. The message was drawn up in forceful enough terms and produced the desired effect. Cicero obeyed and kept away from the Senate on the appointed day. As the

discussion which he had called for could not take place in his absence, the Senate passed on to other matters and the question did not come up again.

About a fortnight later Cicero was obliged to prove in a more active way that he was a servant of Caesar. The time for the consular elections was drawing near. As usual, the thorny question of the provinces to be granted to the future consuls was being discussed. Caesar's opponents seized this opportunity of pointing out that his governorship was coming to an end in 54 and that as his three provinces would thus be available from that date they should be included among those to be given to the consuls of the year 55.

This was a rather brutal way of informing Caesar that they considered his task to be over and that in another eighteen months he would have to retire from his post to make room for someone else. This, however, was far from what he intended to do. It was Cicero who undertook to prove to the Senate that the most vital interests of the Republic demanded that Caesar's powers should be extended beyond the time of their normal expiration.

Numerous were the senators who loudly voiced their indignation at this change-over. From the start his speech was interrupted by vehement protests. A 'virtuous friend', probably no other than Favonius, whose job it was to 'double' Cato in his absence, reminded Cicero that 'the tempest which had hurled him from his country had been aroused by Caesar'. Whereupon the orator replied with great dignity that 'he was here considering the good of the Republic, and not the interests of his personal vengeance'. His heart was 'glowing with love for his country', and it was this feeling which brought him close to Caesar once more. 'People may think what they like,' he cried out. 'It is impossible for me not to be the friend of a man who serves his country well.' To those who encouraged him to revive his old grudges he made this indignant reply: 'How could I be the enemy of a hero whose letters and dispatches make the unknown names of peoples, nations, and countries which his armies have subdued ring in my ears every day?' And then, he asked, why did his colleagues reproach him for doing exactly what they did themselves? He was only following their example: 'As long as Caesar was forming projects of which you did not approve you did not see me siding with him. Since his glorious exploits have changed your ideas and your sentiments you have seen me not only adopting your point of view but even loudly applauding all your decisions.'

In spite of the frequent interruptions, which continued throughout his speech, Cicero was able to develop his thesis to the end and to hold the attention of the Senate. The speech deserves study. It was clearly inspired by Caesar. No doubt he had expressed his ideas through one of his agents, perhaps through Balbus, who had given up his post of military prefect of labour (probably during the second Gallic campaign) and had settled permanently in Rome to do political liaison work for Caesar. Cicero presented two main arguments : (1) the justification for undertaking the war ; (2) the reason why this war should be carried on to the end by the man who had begun it.

‘ Ever since Rome has existed, all wise politicians have recognized that she has had no enemies more dangerous than the Gauls,’ stated Cicero. In fighting against them Caesar was therefore in line with the great historical tradition of his country. In taking up the work of those who went before him, however, he had given it a new aspect and introduced a force hitherto unknown which would make its final achievement possible. Before Caesar, the Romans had been content to remain on the defensive. He had not hesitated to carry the war right into Gallic territory and so had succeeded in bringing the Gauls under Roman domination. After a ‘ redoubtable ’ war, the most powerful of peoples had been subdued, ‘ but they are not yet bound to our empire by laws, by specified rights, by a social peace ’. In leaving the task of completing this war to the man who started it, the Romans could be sure of a quick and lasting peace. If someone were appointed to take his place it was to be feared that ‘ the fires not thoroughly extinguished might be rekindled and cause another conflagration ’. One or two more campaigns, Cicero thought, and the whole of Gaul would be united to the Roman Empire by indissoluble bonds. ‘ But if the work is left incomplete, however far it may have advanced, these people will one day feel their strength returning for another war.’ He wound up with the conclusion that it was imperative to leave Gaul ‘ under the guardianship of the protector to whose strength and virtue she had been confided ’.

This speech produced the desired effect. The senators guessed who had inspired the arguments and bowed before them. As for Cicero himself, none too proud of his ‘ success ’, he shortened his stay at Rome as much as possible and left for his villa at Antium, where his library which suddenly appeared to be in urgent need of a complete overhaul was waiting for him.

*Submission of Armorica*

THE winter of 57-56, the first winter of their enslavement, weighed heavily upon the peoples of Gaul. Even Rome's favourites, the Aedui and the Remi, felt it. The occupiers not only laid hands on all their stores of provisions but in a general way on everything which appeared to them to have any market value. Moreover, as prosperous towns were then numerous in the Gallic countries, the Roman staff indulged in a systematic and organized pillage during those months, under the distinguished leadership of Caesar's quaestor Crassus—the post at that time being filled by the elder son of the triumvir.

The maritime peoples, accustomed to an isolated and independent existence far from the excitements and political intrigues which filled the lives of their neighbours in the east and south-east, suffered most from these methods. The rich and powerful nation of the Veneti, for instance, who handled all the overseas trade of the country and possessed a large fleet, was particularly affected. For them the consequences of the Roman annexation promised to be disastrous: it would bring their naval supremacy to an end; their monopoly of traffic with the tribes on the other side of the Channel (the ancestors of the future masters of the seas did not care for navigation and had no navy of their own<sup>150</sup>) was bound to cease; the arrival of hosts of Italian merchants—the inevitable result of every Roman occupation—would be certain to end in the seizure of all the commercial centres on the coast. It meant the utter ruin of a whole nation.

Driven to the limit of endurance, these people wanted to recapture the liberty which they had lost through surprise and sudden panic. Moreover, the inhabitants of the large island opposite their shores were watching with growing concern the insatiable invader coming nearer and nearer the coast. They offered to help the Veneti with arms and men; perhaps, prompted by the refugees who had fled across the sea to escape Caesar's vengeance, they even incited them to attempt the adventure. Other promises of assistance came from the Greek merchants of Marseilles, who used the ports of the Veneti

for their commerce with the islanders, and who did not feel inclined to give way to their Italian competitors. . . . And so they decided to take action.

'The decisions of the Gauls are sudden and impulsive', Caesar has noted. This one, on the contrary, seems to have been thoroughly considered and carefully planned. It was preceded by an agreement between all the coast-dwellers. The Veneti were to take the initiative and to give the signal for the uprising.<sup>151</sup> The point of departure was very well chosen.

After his lightning conquest, P. Crassus had gone with his legion to establish himself in the neighbourhood of Angers and had begun to carry out the usual programme of every Roman occupation: disarmament, hostages, requisitioning. This young and brilliant military leader turned out to be an indifferent administrator with little foresight. For instance, he allowed his commissioners, who collected the harvest, to travel round the country without military escort. The Veneti took advantage of this and arrested those who came their way. According to Caesar, they 'thought they could use them to obtain the release of the hostages they had given to Crassus'. The young commander sent them delegates to demand the immediate liberation of his agents. They replied by putting his envoys into irons.

News of the arrest of these Roman officers quickly spread throughout the country. Other tribes followed the example of the Veneti and captured all Roman officials who were operating in their territory. The revolt finally spread through the whole of Armorica. Everywhere men were arming. The leaders held a general assembly and pledged themselves to act in the closest concord. A collective proclamation was issued to all the peoples of the coastal areas, calling upon them to 'defend the independence their ancestors had handed down to them, rather than submit to the Roman yoke'. They sent Crassus a deputation, asking him to return their hostages if he wanted his officers back.

The young legate, judging that the situation was growing serious, referred the matter to his chief. Caesar was still at Lucca. He little expected such news. As far as he knew, all of Gaul was 'pacified' and, since September of the previous year, blissfully enjoying the benefits of Roman occupation. Perhaps new plans of conquest had been germinating in his mind during the winter which was just over, and the campaign of 56, the third of his proconsulship, might hold in store some surprise on the banks of the Rhine. . . . At any rate, after

## SUBMISSION OF ARMORICA

reading Crassus' report all his plans gave way to one single decision : the war in Gaul was to be resumed. But it was to be a new kind of war, such as his soldiers had never waged before.

Caesar's chief quality was his ability to adapt himself with extraordinary rapidity to the most difficult and unforeseen circumstances. He recognized the mistake he had made in underestimating the importance of the conquest of the Armorican coast. He had only seen it at first as a heap of rocks and sand which served as a border to the country he had seized. Now a door was opening before him on to a whole new world. It was obscure and confused as yet, and for the time being he could only catch the sound of its distant murmur.

From Lucca he wrote to Crassus : pending his return he was to remain on the defensive, but stopping all other activities he was to construct a fleet capable of defeating that of the Veneti and their allies. This necessitated hiring thousands of technicians, constructing ship-yards, procuring raw materials, providing the necessary means of transport—and all this in the space of a few weeks : time was pressing, a war cannot be kept waiting.

The task seemed crushing, superhuman. Caesar had ordered it, however, so it had to be carried out. And it was. The native populations were made to work like slaves, rowers were fetched from Marseilles, pilots from Gades. All along the Atlantic coast and beside the Mediterranean men were hard at work, and one after another the long swift ships of the newborn fleet made their way towards the mouth of the Loire, which had been chosen as their base.

The allied tribes, for their part, did not remain inactive. They fortified their towns and stored their crops ; they mobilized their entire fleet, secured the co-operation of the people of Finisterre, of the region of Nantes, and of the Lisieux country, drawing into their league the Morini and the Menapii, who after the defeat of the Belgic coalition had taken refuge among their marshes, where still unsubdued they lived as nomads. From the other side of the straits, meanwhile, men and arms were flowing in to support the common cause.

Caesar arrived on the scene at the beginning of May. He established himself at Angers,<sup>152</sup> and decided without delay upon his plan of campaign. Seen at close quarters the danger stood out in all its gravity. It was not merely a matter of setting out in search of new conquests ; Those which had appeared to be so definitely won were once more in the balance. The insurrection was taking on serious proportions, and the revolt was rapidly spreading from one subjected territory to

the other. The magnificent edifice of victory which had risen miraculously in the space of two astounding campaigns suddenly seemed fragile and threatened to crumble. Its ruin would mean the ruin of Caesar himself. Scarcely had he frustrated the schemes of his enemies to rob him of the present and future fruits of his conquest when here was the whole structure tottering and giving way at its very foundation. Everything possible must therefore be done to protect it.

'Knowing that the Gauls in general love change and are quick to embark on a war . . . he thought that he had better divide his army and spread it over a wide space before the coalition became too numerous.' These lines from Caesar's pen enable us to understand better the significance of the first measures he decided to take. So far he had been resolutely faithful to one of the principal rules of Roman strategy which discouraged the scattering of forces in the course of a campaign. He had always kept his entire army concentrated around him, within reach of his hand as it were, and he limited himself to one theatre of operations at a time. Now he was dividing his troops into five separate armies, each destined for a different sector. Labienus was to leave the command of the Tenth Legion and, at the head of a corps of native cavalry, was to go to the Remi 'in order to keep them to their duty', together with their immediate neighbours who recently had been suspected of negotiating with the Germans across the Rhine. Young Crassus with twelve cohorts and several strong contingents of native cavalry (again we note the more and more intensive utilization of fighting forces recruited among the conquered peoples) was sent to occupy Aquitania, otherwise known as Gascony, the Landes and the Pyrenees, 'so as to prevent these tribes from sending help to the Gauls'. The infantry was divided into three groups. Q. Titurius Sabinus with three legions was in charge of operations along the Norman coast.<sup>153</sup> Caesar personally commanded an army of shock troops of which the core was formed by the Tenth Legion and which was to march against the rebels of the interior, while the new fleet, which had left Nantes bearing a total of eighteen cohorts, was to attack the navy of the Veneti in mid-ocean. Caesar entrusted the command of this third group of naval forces to one of his young collaborators, whose name appears for the first time in the *Commentaries* on this occasion: Decimus Brutus.<sup>154</sup> We have no idea where he came from. Perhaps, as has been suggested, he had taken part in Caesar's naval expedition in 61. That would have given him a certain experience of the sea. In any case we must suppose that he had had

some previous opportunity of proving himself in matters of naval warfare, otherwise Caesar would not have entrusted him with a task entailing such heavy responsibilities.

While the equipment of this fleet was being completed, Decimus had gone to carry off all the light vessels to be found in the various ports of the Mediterranean : they were to be ready as a reserve for the squadron concentrated at Nantes. Without waiting for his return, Caesar launched the attack. Leaving his base at Angers he started in the direction of the low country of Morbihan. The Veneti, avoiding battle, took refuge in the fortified places on the coast, where their position at the farthest end of the rocky headlands made them inaccessible. Caesar tried at first to struggle against nature. This time his enemy was the tide, which put his opponents beyond his reach. His legionaries were once more transformed into diggers and accomplished marvels : by means of embankments and dikes they stopped the sea. Their constructions reached the height of the ramparts, but at the last moment a fleet appeared to help the besieged : their goods were loaded on to the ships and they withdrew to a neighbouring fortress.

'This manoeuvre was repeated during a great part of the summer', writes Caesar. These words are worth remembering. They convey some idea of the difficulties he had to contend with from the very beginning of the campaign and the checks he had to endure during the first weeks. They also go to prove that, in spite of the superhuman effort of his workmen, the whole of his fleet was not ready for action at the prescribed time, so that it was not possible for him to open hostilities simultaneously on two fronts—naval and military. He had thought at first that he would be able to dispense with the help of his fleet and to defeat the enemy on land, supported by his legions alone, without having to destroy their fleet in a sea battle. This plan failed. After several fruitless attempts he gave it up and, pitching his camp on the plateaus overlooking the gulf of Morbihan, he awaited Decimus. According to Dion Cassius, Caesar was at that time 'in a very difficult situation'. It was already August, the fine weather would soon be over and nothing had been done. At last his fleet arrived.<sup>155</sup> Seeing his fragile ships outlined against the horizon, his heart was filled with fear. What could they do against the heavy and powerful vessels of the enemy ? After living on hope and counting the days, he now despaired of success. To make matters worse, the weather was definitely against him : a violent wind began to blow



from the land, interfering with the movement of his little rowing-boats.

It was in this state of mind that in the early hours of the morning he took up his position on a hill overlooking the sea, ready to follow every turn of the impending battle as a passive spectator, but with how much anxiety ! He saw Decimus stop in mid-ocean, powerless to move against the wind, at a great distance from the enemy. The latter, favoured by the wind, its full force bellying their leather sails, came to the attack, determined to finish off this feeble vacillating enemy once and for all. Decimus thought he was lost. It was known later that he was preparing to abandon his fleet altogether and to land the troops he had on board. All at once a miracle happened. The wind dropped, the waves subsided, the Veneti's ships were immobilized. Immediately everything changed. Now it was Decimus who was attacking with his countless little units which moved all the more swiftly in the stillness, while the enemy ships lay helpless at the mercy of their hammering blows. It was no longer a battle but a naval massacre to be ended only by the coming of night.

The next morning Caesar came down from his hill to gather the fruits of this miraculous victory. The populations of the neighbouring towns, learning of the defeat of their fleet, offered him themselves and all they possessed. He resolved to punish them with great severity 'so that in the future these barbarians should be more careful to respect the authority of his ambassadors'. That is why all the councillors were put to death and the transaction which had been so successful with the Aduatuci was repeated : all able-bodied persons were sold by auction.

The next good news came from Sabinus, who was conducting operations in Normandy, and then, towards the middle of September, it was learned that Crassus had gained a victory in Aquitania, which made the Narbonne frontier secure.

Thus the summer which had begun so inauspiciously ended in a brilliant apotheosis of Caesar's power. The complete extermination of the Veneti would serve as a salutary lesson for the neighbouring tribes. People had eulogized his 'natural clemency'. Now he had shown that he could easily be cruel and implacable when it came to reducing to obedience those who dared to rise against him.

Actually there were still some left unsubdued. Two tribes had refused to submit to the conqueror as the other tribes had done when the Belgic league was crushed the year before. They were the Morini

and the Menapii. They alone among all the Belgae had not sought his pardon and affected to be unaware of his existence. In vain he had awaited their delegation. No one had come. Such insolence deserved a lesson, and a punitive expedition was therefore decided upon.<sup>156</sup> Caesar did not expect it to last long, otherwise he would not have undertaken it at a time of year when he generally stopped military operations.

‘Caesar hoped to frighten them by the report of his exploits and to subjugate them without trouble’, writes Dion Cassius. It turned out quite differently. Their tactics were not in the least like those of the other Gauls. He himself has admitted this fact. Without towns, living in huts and in a region which was completely covered with forests and marshes, they managed to keep out of sight and out of reach. In his advance across their territory, Caesar neither had a battle to fight nor a fort to besiege. The enemy hid, withdrawing farther and farther into the depths of their forests. Finally Caesar resolved to cut these down. His legionaries thereupon changed into woodcutters. The trees fell before them, paths appeared, the columns were on the march once more and reached a vast clearing. There was no one there—nothing but ravaged fields and deserted farms. While the Roman soldiers were wearing themselves out at their task, the enemy had had ample time to change their hiding-place. Every thing had to be begun all over again. And Caesar began . . .

Soon, however, the rain brought operations to a close. It fell more and more heavily and softened the ground so much that the tents were soon sinking into the mud and it became impossible for men to live in them. This time Caesar owned himself beaten and gave orders to retreat. He departed after having ravaged whatever remained to be ravaged and burnt whatever remained to be burnt.

This brought the campaign of 56 to an end. Once again the legions took up their quarters in a conquered land; once again their commander, putting aside his sword and shield, entered the labyrinth of political intrigue. All was not going well in this domain. The consular elections, which had been put off till January 55, gave him cause for serious concern. The future of his whole achievement depended upon their result. At all costs their successful outcome must be assured. Kept far away from this other ‘theatre of war’ he could not direct operations in person. Once more Caesar proved that he was a man of inexhaustible resources. Taking advantage of the winter lull, he gave leave to an unlimited number of his legionaries,

who were thus enabled to play an effective part in the elections. As, however, he was none too confident of their goodwill, he organized collective departures, sending them home in batches under the personal direction of young Crassus, who had just returned to staff headquarters crowned with new laurels.<sup>157</sup> Caesar could not have chosen a better man to lead these electoral cohorts. This young 'guide' knew that the prestige of his father was involved and he was not unaware that an important rôle had been reserved for him in the undertakings which the latter was planning to carry out as soon as he became consul.

Complete success rewarded the efforts of Caesar, his collaborator, and his agents. Crassus and Pompey were elected consuls. Two months after their entry into office, they passed a law prolonging Caesar's powers for another four years.

## *German Campaign*

WHEN Caesar was preparing to leave the country after the subjection of Gaul, a delegation of Germans came to see him. As he was in a hurry to be off, he told them to return at the beginning of the following summer. Hence they presented themselves once more at the Roman camp in May 55. They were the Ubii, inhabitants of the region of the Rhine around Cologne, and, according to Caesar, they 'formed an important and flourishing state, as far as a German state can be so described'.<sup>158</sup> They were thought to be a little more civilized than the other tribes of the same race, because according to the same authority 'they were situated on the Rhine and merchants often came to visit them'. Harassed by their formidable eastern neighbours the Suebi, 'by far the largest and most warlike tribe of all Germany', they turned their suppliant gaze across enslaved Gaul to the powerful Roman leader, whose name had earned the respect of all the peoples of the Rhine since his victory over Ariovistus.

History repeated itself. The Ubii behaved very much as the Aedui and the Remi had done before them. This time, however, the situation was complicated by the fact that the Suebi were not content with persecuting the Ubii. They had also succeeded in poisoning the existence of two other Germanic people, the Usipetes and Tencteri, who, as it happened, were taking a different line. Instead of imploring the aid of a foreign power, they tried to escape by relying on their own resources. Like the Helvetii, they left their lands and went off in search of a home, taking with them the whole of the civilian population—old men, women, and children—amounting in all to about 430,000. They wandered about Westphalia for three years (58–56) without being able to settle anywhere, and finished by invading the country of the Menapii, who inhabited the lower banks of the Rhine and the Meuse (winter of 56–55).<sup>159</sup> This little Gallic tribe was thus invaded twice in the space of a single year: first by the Romans, then by the Germans. We have seen how fiercely they resisted the former; they gave in very rapidly to the latter. The

arrival of this formidable mass of humanity containing at least a hundred thousand seasoned warriors, produced a tremendous upheaval throughout the region. All these tribes, who for two years had one by one fallen prey to the Roman conqueror, were caught up in a wave of excitement. They saw in these Germans who arrived so providentially the liberators who were going to rid them at last of Caesar's soldiers. Numerous cities sent their ambassadors, beseeching them not to confine themselves to the banks of the Rhine and undertaking to supply them if necessary with provisions and auxiliary troops. Tempted by these promises, the Germans pushed on farther. They crossed the river and spread over the country on both sides of the Meuse among the Eburones and the Condrusi.

Caesar was then in Cisalpine Gaul. Established somewhere near the frontier, perhaps again at Lucca, he was carefully observing all that went on in Rome. The law extending his powers for another four years<sup>180</sup> had just been voted when he heard what had happened on the Rhine. This news caused him the gravest anxiety. He was afraid of the repercussions it might have among the other Gallic peoples. Therefore he decided to cut short his stay in Cisalpine Gaul, and although the season was not propitious for military operations, he rejoined his army which had previously been given orders to concentrate round Amiens.

As soon as he arrived he proceeded to make discreet inquiries. The result confirmed his fears. Under a show of perfect loyalty a vast anti-Roman plot was developing, and the tribes were trusting to these Germans to deliver them from Caesar, just as three years earlier they had looked to the Romans to protect them from Ariovistus.

Having obtained this information, Caesar made all the more haste with his military preparations. He called an assembly of the Gallic chiefs whom he had not yet informed of his investigations. Judging that it would be wiser to conceal what he knew, he encouraged them to resist the invaders courageously. They could count on him. He would not desert them and would protect them again this time as he had in 58. They would, of course, have to make him a suitable return, particularly in the form of provisions, but their military contribution need not be more than in former years; a cavalry division about five thousand strong.

Thus, for the fourth time since he had come to Gaul, Caesar was going to war. His troops started in the direction of Maestricht, where the main body of Usipetes and Tencteri were encamped. When

these tribes learnt of his approach they hastened to send him messengers who spoke to him very much as Ariovistus had done under similar circumstances in 58 : 'The Germans did not intend to begin a war against the Roman people, but if they were attacked they would not refuse to fight, for the tradition of the Germans was to defend themselves whoever the aggressor might be, and not to beg for peace.' This, then, was what they proposed : they had only come into the land of the Menapii because they had been driven from their own country. They asked that they might be allowed to keep the territory which they had just occupied, or if that were not possible, that the Romans themselves would grant them some land. In return, they offered their friendship which they thought might be useful to the Romans.

Caesar replied in a clear and peremptory tone : no friendship was possible between Romans and Germans so long as the latter remained in Gaul. It was unjust that a nation which had been unable to preserve its own territory from invasion should seize what belonged to other people. There was no available soil in Gaul, especially for such vast multitudes. In the end, he proposed a solution which must have greatly surprised the Germanic delegates : all they had to do was to settle in the land of the Ubii, their compatriots, who were complaining about the violence of the Suebi and were seeking protectors ; in other words, after having failed to protect their own territory, they were invited to undertake the defence of someone else's. This would certainly have been greatly to Caesar's advantage. In this way he would rid himself of an unwelcome invader by sending him to employ his energies elsewhere and by weakening in preliminary battles a potential enemy of his own, whose power constituted a permanent threat to Roman domination.

The delegates replied that they would report Caesar's answer to those who sent them, and that they would return in three days to tell him what decision had been reached. In the meantime they asked Caesar to halt his march. Did they have some hidden motive when they made this request ? We do not know. At any rate, Caesar thought so. Remembering the trick he himself had played on the Helvetii some three years earlier, he thought that this time the Germans might well be using the same stratagem against him. This was all the more likely, because he knew that they were hourly awaiting the return of the greater part of their cavalry sent in search of corn on the other side of the Meuse. He accordingly continued his advance.

The deputation left with his proposals and returned at the appointed

time. Meanwhile the Roman troops had been marching on and were now only ten miles away from the German camp. The reply was most conciliatory. The Germans agreed to come to an understanding with the Ubii, as Caesar had suggested. They only asked that another three days should be granted them to get into touch with this tribe and to make sure that they were ready to welcome them into their country. In the meantime they begged Caesar to give orders to his cavalry not to engage in the battle for which they appeared to be preparing. Again Caesar was suspicious. Once more he told the Germans that his conditions were still the same, still just as severe : there was to be no delay ; their leaders must appear before him the very next day 'in the greatest possible number' in order to learn the fate that he had in store for them. He nevertheless agreed to slow down his vanguard and to refrain from all aggression.

It is not very easy to discern from the *Commentaries* what happened next. Caesar claims that a small troop of German horsemen—eight hundred in all—treacherously and in violation of the truce they themselves had demanded—attacked the Roman cavalry, 'who were completely unsuspecting'. It is indeed quite possible that the initiative for the attack did not come from the Roman side, but how far they 'were completely unsuspecting' remains open to question. Caesar himself admits that the Germans attacked 'as soon as they saw our horsemen'. That leads us to conclude that these horsemen had continued their advance, at a slower pace, perhaps, in obedience to orders, but with enough momentum to arrive finally at the edge of the German camp. It was when they saw them arriving that the horsemen who had remained in the camp, without thinking of the enemy's crushing superiority—they were eight hundred against five thousand—bore down upon them, no doubt in the belief that the oncoming army was preparing to break through their fortifications. It was a total and shameful defeat for the Roman, or, rather the Gallic cavalry they employed. Caesar put it down to surprise. This we know was a favourite excuse which he used together with that of unfavourable ground to explain set-backs of his troops. At any rate, it was a good excuse this time and exactly what Caesar wanted, for it enabled him to strike while putting the blame on the enemy. The next morning, when all the chiefs of the Usipetes and the Tencteri together with their elders appeared before him in full numbers, he refused to hold any conference and had them all put under arrest. Then his troops were immediately ordered to attack.

It was an overwhelming surprise for the Germans. In the absence of their leaders, having had neither time to hold a council nor to reach for their weapons, they lost their heads and abandoned all thought of resistance, except for a handful of them who were able to arm themselves quickly and engage in battle among the chariots and the baggage. But their desperate attempt was in vain. Soon they were following the hordes of non-combatants in flight towards the Rhine, their last hope of safety. Most of them were massacred before they could reach the river. The *Commentaries* contain one swift, dry little sentence of which the calm serenity only serves to accentuate the cold cruelty : 'A crowd of women and children were left behind and they began to flee in all directions. Caesar sent his cavalry in pursuit of them.' These were the same horsemen who had behaved in such a cowardly way the day before. Now it was easy for them to pose as warriors. We can better imagine the character of this 'battle' if we keep in mind a passage in the *Commentaries* which specifies that the Romans won it 'without losing a single man and with only a very small number of wounded'; and Caesar proudly adds, 'They had to deal with four hundred and thirty thousand enemies', thus with surprising disingenuousness including in the number of German combatants their wives, their children, and their old men.<sup>161</sup>

Thanks to the care with which the propaganda for Caesar was being carried out, this lamentable affair was reported in Rome as an outstandingly glorious victory. The slogan of '430,000 barbarians wiped out in a single battle' was presented to the public, which was dazzled and stunned by such a formidable feat of arms. The names of these exterminated people, unknown until now, and so strange and unpronounceable to Latin ear and tongue, added still more to the effect produced. What was now being announced seemed to surpass all previous victories, and a proposal to decree another public thanksgiving in honour of Caesar was brought before the Senate. Cato, who since Cicero's complete subservience was the only qualified spokesman of the anti-Caesarian party, opposed it energetically. Angrily he demanded that instead of honouring Caesar with this mark of national gratitude, they should deliver him into the hands of those whom he had made to suffer so cruelly and so unjustly. This was the only way, he said, to wipe out the disgrace which the barbarous conduct of this criminal leader had brought upon Rome. If there were any question of offering sacrifices to the gods it should rather be to thank them 'for not allowing the folly and delusion of



their general to be visited on his soldiers and for having spared their city from punishment'.

Cato's furious indignation gave the senators food for thought and the proposal was not followed up. Caesar was immediately informed about it by his agents. He replied by sending a letter to the Senate which contained 'a tissue of damaging accusations' against Cato. They did not all appear to be too well founded, and Caesar's friends were ill-advised when they clamoured for an immediate reading of the document. This provided Cato with another opportunity for making a speech; and after proving that the imputations against him were no more than 'ridiculous jokes', he exposed the full extent of the danger into which Caesar was dragging the Republic. Again he carried his point, and the project of according new honours to Caesar was given up for good.

When Caesar heard of this, he made no response. He was then involved in a new adventure the scope of which was to surpass everything he had ever undertaken.

The corps of German horsemen learnt of the massacre which had just taken place when they returned from their requisitioning tour. Thereupon they turned round, and avoiding all contact with the Roman troops, beat a hasty retreat towards the Rhine. They succeeded in reaching it and crossed unhurt to the right bank where the Sugambri, who inhabited that region, gave them a friendly welcome. As soon as he was informed that this fraction of the enemy army had managed to escape from a punishment which he considered to be richly deserved, Caesar sent a mission to the Sugambri demanding them to hand over 'these men who had borne arms against him and against Gaul', which in his eyes was equivalent to a double crime.

Dion Cassius very judiciously remarks that Caesar did not expect to obtain what he asked, since the tribes living beyond the Rhine did not yet fear the Romans enough to obey such an injunction; 'but', he adds, 'he wanted a pretext for crossing the river, for he had a keen desire to do what no other Roman general had done before him'. That certainly seems to have been in Caesar's mind, and our only criticism of the Greek historian is that he expressed himself in rather naïve terms. There is no doubt that Caesar longed to do 'better and to accomplish greater things' than his predecessors, but he also knew to perfection how to unite his personal ambitions

to those which the course of history and the combination of events at this time imposed upon Rome.

Caesar appeared on the horizon of Roman history at a period when his country, after having subjugated the peoples of the Mediterranean basin, was faced with two redoubtable and dangerous enemies. Europe was then divided between three great powers : Rome, Gaul, and Germany. In two amazing campaigns Caesar had crushed Gaul. In the course of these same campaigns he had come into contact with the Germans. Their frequent incursions beyond the Rhine showed him clearly that they were no longer satisfied with their own territory and that they were on the point of launching out on a new policy of conquest designed to create a gigantic empire whose frontiers would not stop at the Rhine, but would eventually reach right to the Atlantic coast. After that, there would be nothing left for Rome but to become a second-rate power, until its turn came to be absorbed by the colossus from beyond the Rhine. The victory over Ariovistus had averted the immediate danger, but the threat remained, and Caesar realized that it could be ended only by preventing all German infiltration on the left bank of the river. To achieve this result he decided that it was necessary to establish a zone of protection on the right bank, which would make it possible to check and if necessary repulse the flow of barbarians before it began to spread.<sup>162</sup> This was Caesar's great project. Just as, using the Helvetii, he had formed a kind of buffer state in the south-eastern sector of Gaul, he now proposed to establish a similar one along the whole of the eastern frontier following the right bank of the river. He already had the support of the Ubii, who in his opinion should take over the rôle of the Aedui among the other peoples of the Rhineland. The Sugambri were their neighbours to the north. The seizure of their country together with that of the Ubii, which in Caesar's eyes would be a mere formality, would provide Rome with first-rate strategic bases. Once he had gained possession of them, he would only have to extend their range of action and to make them secure by means of a series of offensives. Such was Caesar's plan which he had begun to execute while Cato was still thundering against him in the Senate.

Things developed according to plan. The Sugambri proudly replied to Caesar's demands that 'the sovereignty of the Roman people did not go beyond the Rhine ; if he disputed the right of the Germans to come into Gaul without his consent, how could he claim sovereignty or authority on their side of the river ?' This haughty refusal called

for action. Caesar was able to find a double justification for it by inducing the Ubii to beg him for assistance against the Suebi who 'were threatening their existence'.

That was a very clever move. Crossing the Rhine was a difficult and dangerous undertaking if a hostile reception was to be feared on the opposite bank. In choosing the sector inhabited by the Ubii for landing his troops, Caesar avoided the risk of an attack during their passage. According to him, this tribe had even offered him a large number of boats for the transport of his army. But he declined their offer, because he considered that 'such a course was too risky, and incompatible with his dignity and that of the Roman nation'.

Aside from all forms of prestige, however, it seems clear that it was above all his concern to guarantee the complete safety of his army while crossing to the opposite bank which prompted Caesar's decision. He probably judged that it was imprudent to allow the fate of his whole enterprise to depend upon the frail craft which his new allies declared themselves ready to place at his disposal. Perhaps he did not feel absolutely sure of them either and feared that his troops, once they were split up into small groups, might become an easy target for an enemy attack as they landed. The memory of a similar operation formerly attempted in Spain may have served him as a wholesome warning.

The solution he hit upon was in every respect worthy of him. A bridge would be constructed from one bank to the other so that his legions could cross the great sacred river in faultless columns. We may be pretty certain that before deciding upon this plan Caesar had consulted the technicians attached to his staff. There was nothing in the undertaking itself to dismay them. In the course of previous campaigns there had been similar cases and they had dealt with them admirably, sometimes accomplishing perfect miracles. This time, however, the task was exceptionally difficult on account of the width, the rapidity, and the depth of the river. Nevertheless, their opinion must have been favourable, since the order was finally given to begin the work. It is true that in Caesar's mind it was all decided in advance: the crossing of his army would be done in this way, or not at all.

The peoples on the left bank of the Rhine were the first to feel the consequences of this resolution. Enormous quantities of material were needed for the construction. They had to be found in the shortest possible time. Caesar's orders were final. Tens of thousands of men were set to work. First of all they had to cut down a considerable

number of the biggest trees to be made into beams a foot and a half to two feet thick and at least nine feet long. It was upon these beams that the proposed bridge was to rest. It was to be 1,500 feet long and 40 feet wide. Special machines were built to lower the beams into the water. Even before they were ready the construction had begun. Caesar's legionaries, this time transformed into bridge-builders, set to work as the materials arrived and were helped by teams of native workmen pressed into the service by the *praefectus fabrum* of Caesar's army. In ten days the bridge was finished and the legionaries crossed the river in marching order, headed by their Eagles.<sup>163</sup>

From the opposite bank the Ubii, docile and resigned, watched the approach of a man on a magnificent white charger. He was thin and bald and wore splendidly embossed armour which gleamed in the sun, a symbol of triumph. This was their new master. Caesar dismounted. Deputations filed past him assuring him of their respectful obedience. He had some friendly words for all of them, but did not fail to demand a considerable number of hostages. His troops were ordered to continue their march in the direction of the country of the Sugambri, the main object of the expedition. Ever since the preparations started this tribe had understood Caesar's intentions and knew what fate he had in store for them. Therefore they did not wait till the last moment. Realizing the impossibility of offering adequate resistance to the Roman army drawn up for battle, they followed the advice of the Tencteri and the Usipetes, whom they were sheltering in their country, and adopted the tactics of guerrilla warfare which the Menapii and the Morini had used so successfully the year before. Like them, they left their homes, and taking all their belongings with them, went to hide in the marshes in the depths of their country. Caesar found himself in a deserted land, but he was able to seize their crops. In their haste to get away from the invader, the Sugambri had not had time to cut the corn. This task now fell to his legionaries. From bridge-builders they turned into reapers, except for some incendiary teams who were ordered to set fire to all the villages, farms, barns, etc., which were still standing. The whole operation took only a short time, scarcely a week in all. Caesar had learnt from experience; he did not want to penetrate too far into the interior of the country in pursuit of an elusive enemy. He preferred to go back to the Ubii.

Disturbing news awaited him on his return. The Suebi, that immense and formidable people, who inspired all the other German

tribes with a constant dread, had heard that a great part of the right bank of the Rhine was occupied by Roman troops, and they resolved to give an armed reply to this armed threat. A general assembly of the nation called up all able-bodied men for battle and ordered the evacuation of the towns and fortresses. As usual, the women, children, and the old men were hidden in the forests. An army of half a million combatants was concentrated in the heart of the country. There it was to await the Roman legions. On learning of this gigantic plan, Caesar was perplexed. He wondered how with his thirty thousand men he would be able to defeat five hundred thousand Germans, on difficult and unknown ground, far from his base and with a hastily constructed bridge as his sole means of retreat. He also wondered, perhaps, whether the German hordes would be content to remain passive, and whether, with their crushing superiority in numbers, they would not in their turn pass to the offensive in order to deliver their country from the invader. . . . It was then that he fully realized the uncertainty of the whole adventure upon which he had so lightly embarked without measuring its consequences. Then too he must have seen that he had underestimated the number and the power of his enemies, and had allowed himself to be led away by the servile adulation of a few terrorized tribes. Accordingly at the last moment, with firmness and lucidity, he had the courage to destroy at one blow all his cherished hopes and to renounce the fine illusions which had delighted his imagination. He ordered his army to leave the right bank of the Rhine and recrossed the river. The reasons which he afterwards gave to justify his decision are remarkable :

As he [Caesar] had accomplished all the objects he had set himself in crossing the Rhine—to fill the Germans with fear, to punish the Sugambri and to deliver the Ubii from the pressure under which they lived—after spending eighteen days beyond the Rhine and judging that he had attained a sufficiently glorious and sufficiently useful result, he returned to Gaul and cut the bridge behind him.

No modern ‘communiqué’ could have expressed such a delicate situation more cleverly or disguised the truth with greater style and dignity. *To fill the Germans with fear?* But—at the mere mention of the concentration of their forces Caesar had hastily beat a retreat, and to make more sure of his safety had destroyed the bridge which had been built at such great effort. *To punish the Sugambri?* But

it was only their land on which he had wreaked his vengeance, and not one of them had been caught. *To deliver the Ubii?* But he had abandoned them, and on his departure left them more exposed than ever to the threat of invasion by the Suebi. But, though his pride as a general and as a Roman must have suffered cruelly, he had taken the only reasonable course which was left him and had resigned himself courageously to the sacrifice of his ambitions.

Massed on the river bank, the Ubii stood, grave and silent, as they watched the Roman columns withdraw, hammering the bridge with their rhythmic tread. They were passing—they had gone. And behind them the bridge itself, under the pickaxe of the demolition workers, collapsed, falling in pieces and carrying to the depth of the ocean the dreams of a thin bald man in gleaming armour, who had wanted to be their master. . . .

*Expedition into Britain*

AFTER the resounding effect produced in Rome by Caesar's victory over the Usipetes and the Tencteri the meagre results of the German campaign aroused comparatively little enthusiasm, despite all the propaganda so skilfully orchestrated by Balbus and his assistants. It was vain to insist upon the symbolic significance inherent in the presence of Roman legions beyond the Rhine—even though this triumph was but momentary—or to go into ecstasies over the miraculous achievement of Caesar's bridge-builders so far surpassing anything previously accomplished by technical experts. The fact remained that, at the end of three weeks, these legions had had to recross the river in the opposite direction, and the masterpiece of construction had been carried away in ruins by the rushing waters. Taken all round, just after Caesar's powers had been extended, this was a poor enough start. All was not lost, however. The summer was by no means over; there was still enough time to attempt a new expedition which might bring Caesar a startling change of fortune. It only remained to decide where to go and what enemy to attack.

It was then that Caesar began to turn his eyes in the direction of the great island of Britain which, since his victorious campaign against the Veneti, seem to be virtually standing there waiting for him to put out his hand and take it. Moreover, this was not just a sudden scheme, improvised to fill up a few idle weeks of summer weather. The idea that some day he would have to settle with 'those on the opposite shore' had become familiar to him. He had not failed to notice that most of the seditious disturbances in Gaul could be traced to the influence of British agitators. He knew that Gallic leaders had taken refuge among their friends and kinsfolk across the water, that British volunteers came to the Continent to fight in the ranks of the rebels, and that arms and supplies were finding their way over from the island. Its subjection was a necessity if he wanted to consolidate the results of the Roman conquest in Gaul. Moreover, there were yet other reasons for this enterprise which must have appealed to him more and more strongly, as his conquests spread

towards the Atlantic coast. The Romans of his time had only the vaguest information about this island, but they had formed an idea that it abounded in natural riches of every kind, and the story of gigantic pearls to be found there in profusion had captured the imagination of many people, including Caesar himself.<sup>164</sup> During the three years of Roman conquest, Gaul had been systematically emptied and shorn of its wealth. Now an unexplored mine was waiting. It was still intact, and expert hands would be able to delve into it most profitably and without undue effort. On Caesar's staff there were many who had followed him in the firm hope of rapidly acquiring vast fortunes. They had not all been able to satisfy their greed. They had returned empty-handed from the expedition across the Rhine. It was therefore all the more necessary to offer them a new and fruitful field of activity.

Finally, there was a reason which seems to have passed unnoticed up till now. It was the constant pressure exercised upon Caesar by the large commercial companies of Italy, always on the lookout for new markets. Since the surrender of the Veneti they had established themselves in their ports and were taking possession of their merchant ships. They differed from the Veneti, however, in that they were not merely engaged in transport. The Roman merchants, who brought their own goods to Britain, needed warehouses on the coast of the island. They needed safe roads which would make it easy for them to carry their merchandise into the interior of the country. This necessitated, first and foremost, the establishment on the south-east coast of a certain number of fortified places provided with garrisons strong enough to protect the new traffic and to serve as future points of departure for the total conquest of the island. Such were the main reasons which led Caesar to undertake his expedition to Britain. Perhaps he had intended to postpone it until after the final establishment of Roman domination over the Rhineland ; but circumstances caused this adventure to be launched earlier than he had originally foreseen.

Two unfavourable conditions marked it at the outset.

1. Time was limited.
2. The ground was not prepared.

1. In none of Caesar's other campaigns did the time element play so important a part. The land operations were closely linked with those at sea, and on this account the problem was particularly urgent. Caesar does not seem to have given it the attention it required.<sup>165</sup>



2. Hitherto Caesar had been actively assisted in all his projects by agents who prepared the ground by sapping the national resistance within the country which was destined to be his prey. Among the Britons he found neither a Divitiacus nor an Iccius. He therefore had to begin at the beginning and to make a straightforward attack. As he knew nothing of the country he was preparing to conquer, he judged it necessary to collect in advance all available information on the island and its inhabitants. He set about it, however, in a somewhat unusual manner by applying to the merchants of the Veneti for the details he wanted. He called them together and asked them a whole series of questions concerning the size of the island, the character and numbers of its inhabitants, their way of living and of making war, and concerning the ports which could receive a large number of ships. As might have been expected (we cannot help wondering why Caesar did not realize it himself), these merchants, half ruined as a result of the Romans' arrival in their country, were not particularly anxious to facilitate his task and unanimously declared they knew nothing. Unable to extract any information from them, Caesar was obliged to send one of his officers, the military tribune Volusenus, to explore the coast and find out which places might be used for a landing.

While waiting for his return, Caesar established his base on the Continent in a place as near as possible to the island. He led his army into the Boulonnais country, from which the passage to Britain was the shortest. He had been there a year before to bring the recalcitrant Morini to reason. We already know the circumstances which obliged him to give up that project. There was no question of returning to it : the British affair alone interested him at the moment. He therefore contented himself with a military occupation of the coast and established his headquarters at Boulogne, which was then called Portus-Itius. The inhabitants of the country this time showed a wise resignation, announced their complete submission and apologized for their past conduct : ' They had behaved like base and ignorant men in making war on the Roman nation.' Now they declared themselves ready to obey Caesar's orders. He merely asked for hostages but otherwise left them in peace. His thoughts were elsewhere.

All these preparations did not pass unnoticed. The merchants questioned by Caesar informed their clients across the Channel. The latter took a serious view of the matter. Until these last years they had been living in isolation from the Continent, attending to their own affairs. They had only vague and confused ideas about Rome

and the Romans.<sup>166</sup> They imagined that this nation lived somewhere far off at the other end of the world in an inaccessible land. Then, during the last months of 58 they had learnt of the double defeat of the Helvetii and of Ariovistus and they had heard of Caesar. From that time, each summer had brought him nearer to them. He had just appeared on the shores of the ocean. His legions were henceforth to camp opposite their island. Now it was their turn to endure the fate which the insatiable ambition of the Roman conqueror had inflicted on the peoples of the Continent.<sup>167</sup>

The Britons were rugged and courageous men, but little accustomed to war on a large scale, and they tried at first to negotiate. Some tribes of the south-east, more nearly threatened on account of their proximity to the Continent, sent ambassadors to Caesar. They said they had come 'to offer their submission to Rome', and this is what Caesar himself has recorded. Everything points to the fact, however, that it was simply a diplomatic manoeuvre to gain time, and by prolonging negotiations to enable them to finish their preparations for defence. Whether Caesar believed them or merely pretended to believe them we do not know. He received the British ambassadors, encouraged them to 'persevere in these sentiments', made them 'generous promises'—but did not discuss terms with them. It was not until he had set foot on their soil that he intended to come to an agreement, or, in other words, to dictate his conditions. Accordingly he wished them a good journey home, and instructed them to prepare the minds of their compatriots to welcome the representative of Roman power, who would soon be coming to their island. To facilitate this task he sent with them his new factotum, Commius, king of the Atrebates. He apparently had taken the place of Divitiacus, of whom we hear no more after the war against the Belgae. Commius embarked bearing a special message from Caesar to the people of Britain, and furnished with precise instructions: 'To visit as many of the tribes as possible, to persuade them to place themselves under the protection of Rome, and to announce that Caesar himself would shortly be arriving.' An escort of thirty horsemen accompanied him, providing a decorative background rather than a real means of protection.

After an absence of five days the military tribune Volusenus, who had been sent to find suitable places for landing, returned and submitted his report. It was somewhat brief. Being a rather timid explorer and excessively cautious, Volusenus had not dared to land anywhere, but had merely sailed in the vicinity of the island, observing

its coast-line from a distance. Caesar had to be content with these vague indications. Moreover, he was in a hurry to reach his objective : August was nearly over and the weather was becoming less and less favourable. For several days violent winds had held up the ships specially intended for transporting his cavalry. They had been unable to reach Boulogne and were immobilized in a little port about seven miles away. At last, weary of waiting, Caesar sent his horsemen to Ambleteuse, where these boats were waiting ; his two legions (the Seventh and the Tenth) embarked on the eighty ships which were at Boulogne, and Caesar with his staff went on board the warships which had been reserved for them.<sup>168</sup> Then, learning one night at about twelve o'clock that the weather was favourable, he ordered anchors to be weighed and the expeditionary force started off. They had neither provisions nor baggage ; Caesar himself, we are told, was accompanied only by three slaves—so firm was his conviction that the enterprise would be of short duration and that he would easily find all he needed for the support of his army once he was on the spot.

It took them several hours to leave port. Each ship left as soon as it was loaded. They sailed all night and at dawn were still far away from the coast of Britain. It was only towards nine in the morning that the first vessels of the Roman fleet, bearing Caesar and his officers, reached the shore at Dover. From afar the proconsul distinguished the forms of human beings moving about on the hills dominating the port. He thought at first that these were the representatives of the British tribes who, under Commius' guidance, were coming to meet him. Very soon, however, his illusions were dispelled ; these crowds massed on the heights were not in a welcoming mood. They all bore arms and seemed more as though they were preparing for battle with the newcomers. No longer in any doubt as to their real intentions, Caesar gave orders to stop, and at a certain distance from the coast he waited for the ships of his legions to join him. They did not arrive till nearly two o'clock in the afternoon. As for the cavalry which had gone off to embark at Ambleteuse, there was no news whatever. . . . Caesar decided to do without it. During the hours of waiting opposite these shores which had suddenly shown themselves to be so inhospitable, he called upon his legates and tribunes to join him on his ship. It was then that he 'informed them of his intentions', or, in other words, apprised them of the situation : instead of a peaceful and effortless landing, they would have to fight and to gain access to the island at the price of a hard struggle.

It so happened that at the end of the conference they had the wind and tide in their favour. Caesar, guided by the information obtained from Volusenus, gave the signal to go ahead in a northerly direction and reached the wide beach of Deal, about six miles from Dover. It was there that he proposed to disembark.<sup>169</sup> When he arrived, the Britons were already there. They had followed the movements of the ships and their horsemen had no trouble in getting there first.

This time Caesar did not withdraw. He probably reasoned that he would meet with the same difficulty, no matter when or where he landed. He might as well face it here, on an open beach, where they could fight face to face on flat ground. Accordingly the order was given to disembark.

From his ship he watched the progress of the operation with the closest attention, taking minute note of its many rapidly changing developments. It was a severe trial for his legionaries. On account of their size, the ships were forced to stop right out at sea. The soldiers, drawn up on the bridge in battle array, were ordered to jump off and swim ashore. The sea was rough. The legionaries, burdened with their arms, looked hesitatingly at the waves which were lashing the side of the ships and against which they would have to struggle before reaching the shore. Yet, these were the men of the Tenth Legion, the bravest of all the brave men in Caesar's army. What their general was asking of them that day seemed beyond their power; they did not dare to go through with it. Then, an obscure non-commissioned officer, the standard-bearer of the legion, jumped into the water calling on his comrades to follow him. The centurions in the same vessel, fired by his example, plunged in after him. 'And when those in the other boats saw them,' reports Caesar, 'they followed and advanced towards the enemy.'

Once on dry land, the legionaries found their courage again and charged with their usual fury. The Britons could not withstand the shock and fled, leaving the field clear for the Romans. Without his cavalry, Caesar was unable to go in pursuit of them and remained on the beach.

Next day a deputation of islanders came to see him. It was led by his envoy Commius who told Caesar of the misfortunes which had befallen him. He had scarcely disembarked, and had had no time to communicate Caesar's message to the inhabitants who had run to meet him, before he was arrested and cast into chains. After their defeat they had hastened to set him free with many apologies.

Caesar spoke severely to the messengers, but his words were tempered with a certain leniency. 'Having reproached them', we read in the *Commentaries*, 'for having made war on him without cause after they had spontaneously sent deputies to the Continent asking for peace, Caesar declared that he would pardon them on account of their ignorance, and he demanded hostages.' To prove their good faith, several of the delegates offered themselves there and then as hostages, and it was promised that the remainder should be handed over without delay. Peace was restored. The Britons, released from the army, returned to their fields, and the chiefs of the various tribes flocked to Caesar's camp bringing him assurances of their perfect loyalty.

During the following days Caesar did not stir from the beach where his troops had disembarked. He was still without news of his cavalry. While he was waiting he anchored his transport vessels, and the long boats, which had been so invaluable to him during the recent battle on account of ease with which they could be steered, were pulled up on shore.

At last, on the fourth day, the eagerly awaited convoy appeared on the horizon. From the cliffs of Walmer, where the Roman camp had been established, Caesar and his soldiers anxiously watched its arrival. Suddenly a tempestuous gale arose. In vain the ships struggled against it. Scattered at the mercy of the winds and driven in the direction of the Continent, they were obliged to return in pitiful condition. Caesar remained powerless at his observation post during this disaster, which deprived him of the horsemen without whom the mopping up operations he had planned could not be carried out.

As the day drew to a close the last ship disappeared and was swallowed up in the dusk. Night fell. The storm went on raging with renewed violence. It was the last full moon before the autumnal equinox, when the tides are at their highest. Caesar did not know this. No one among his followers had thought of it either. At dawn his eyes beheld a heart-rending sight. His entire fleet was almost completely destroyed by the incoming sea, and on the shore littered with wreckage his ships lay broken and useless. 'This state of affairs moved the whole army very deeply', he notes in his *Commentaries*. That is understandable enough. Without any means of transport, he saw himself spending the winter on this none too friendly coast, without provisions, baggage, or shelter from rain and cold, and exposed to attack from the islanders, who would most certainly take advantage of all his difficulties.

That indeed is what happened. The British chiefs who were in the camp had witnessed the disaster and began to disappear discreetly. None of their colleagues arrived, nor did the promised hostages. The demobilized men were called once more to arms, and a war, underground at first—a real guerrilla war—began.

It opened with an unpleasant surprise which nearly cost Caesar dearly.

He had been able to face the new situation with his usual adaptability and strength of mind. He gave up all idea of taking any military initiative. His army was divided into two groups: the Seventh Legion was sent in search of provisions, and the Tenth was set to work upon the reconstruction of the fleet. Thus while some of his soldiers were scattered over the countryside gathering in the reaped corn, or if necessary harvesting what was still standing, the others, formed into teams of workmen, laboured to repair the least damaged ships with the wood and bronze of those which had suffered most.

One wonders how the officer in command of the Seventh Legion, knowing that he was in enemy country, could allow his men, while engaged in the peaceful activities of rustic life, to scatter unarmed over the countryside. The peasants watched them for some time without giving any signs of hostility. Then one day crowds of armed men, who had been hiding in the woods, rushed from their ambush and fell upon Caesar's reapers. Encircled within a few seconds, unarmed, with the enemy coming at them from all sides, it seemed as though the Roman soldiers would be massacred to the last man. In the camp, which was left with only four groups, half a cohort strong, to guard it, no one suspected anything. Suddenly they saw an enormous cloud of dust rising in the direction of the fields. Some sentinels came to tell Caesar. He understood at once what was happening. Without losing a second, he called together the few hundred men who were there, and himself leading his little troop ran headlong to the place. He arrived just as the encircled legion had reached the point when they could resist no longer. The assailants fled at his sudden approach, thinking that he had considerable reinforcements with him, and faithful to their usual tactics, they avoided battle by plunging once more into the depths of their woodland retreat. Caesar had neither the means nor the inclination to pursue them. He considered himself lucky to have saved his legion and was content to lead it back to camp, where it arrived in a pitiful enough condition.

Fortunately the weather changed, and for several days there was nothing but uninterrupted rain which kept the Roman troops in camp and at the same time prevented further enemy attacks. The work on the fleet continued, however. No sooner had a few ships been put in order than they were sent to Boulogne to fetch the materials needed to complete the more important repairs. As soon as these ships returned the work was finished, and according to Caesar only twelve ships had to be sacrificed in order to recondition all the rest of his fleet.

Meanwhile, the Britons had displayed an intense activity. We will let Caesar describe it :

They sent messengers in every direction, making known how few we were and explaining what an opportunity there was to seize booty and to regain their independence for ever, if they could drive the Romans from the island. This brought about the speedy concentration of large forces of infantry and cavalry that were approaching our camp.

Caesar did not allow himself to be taken unawares. Having placed his troops in battle array in front of the camp, he awaited the attack. His legionaries bore it without flinching. Then they themselves made a counter-attack and drove back the enemy, who offered little resistance and left the battlefield with all speed. Most regretfully Caesar let them go. All he had to send after them were the thirty horsemen of Commius who had been arrested with their chief and liberated at the same time as he was. The little group galloped for some time in the direction taken by the foe, and finally came back after setting fire to all the houses on their route, since they could find nothing better to do.

That was their last exploit. Henceforth Caesar had but one idea : to leave the island as soon as possible and to get back to the Continent. Then, in the evening of the day following the battle, a favourable wind began to blow. He made his soldiers board the ships as quickly as possible, and shortly after midnight he sailed.

The day before, ambassadors had once again come to Caesar with offers of peace. As he was in a hurry to depart he sent them back with the request to deliver to his headquarters in Gaul twice as many hostages as he had originally demanded. The Britons did not argue : they saw the great conqueror preparing to leave. . . . That was all they wanted.

The Roman fleet made its way back to the Continent as best it could. Caesar at least had the consolation of having come through

this unfortunate adventure without too many losses. Only two ships were unable to put in at the appointed ports, and driven farther south, went ashore at the beach of Le Portel. The three hundred legionaries on board were nearly massacred on landing. The natives probably imagined, when they saw them arriving, that they were all that was left of Caesar's expeditionary force, and that the day had finally come when they could avenge themselves with very little trouble for all the humiliations they had endured. Immediate help had to be sent to these troops. That was not all, however. Caesar had hardly landed when he learned that the Morini in the marshy districts were also in a state of revolt, probably for the same cause. The legions which had disembarked were dispatched under the leadership of Labienus to bring them to reason. Then, a few days later, the two legates Sabinus and Cotta, to whom Caesar had entrusted the task of subduing the elusive Menapii during his absence, returned admitting that they had had but little success: a few villages had been set on fire; as for the enemy, they were as inaccessible as ever. Caesar affected to be satisfied with this poor result and proceeded to settle his troops in their winter quarters. Then he sent off to Rome a detailed report concerning the events of his recent campaign.

Of this valuable document nothing remains but the brief mention made of it in the *Commentaries*. There is every reason to think that Caesar used it later to draw up the corresponding chapters in his work. What, unfortunately, we do not know is how he managed to arrange his material so that humiliating defeats were transformed into glorious exploits, and an obvious double set-back was presented as a series of brilliant victories.<sup>170</sup> We do know, however, how the report was received in Rome. The mere fact that the Senate once more felt obliged to order thanksgivings in his honour and even to increase their number is indication enough. It was above all the 'epic' of the expedition to Britain which was exploited by his propaganda agents. The pitiful return was kept in the shade. The theory was that it had been merely a 'preliminary reconnaissance' which was but the prelude to the real operations to come. A great deal was made of the immense riches hidden beneath the soil of the island, of the incalculable treasures which were to enrich the Republic, and, of course, those to whom the task of collecting them was entrusted. The result was not slow in coming. There was a veritable scramble. Caesar received an avalanche of petitions. Men pursued him with all sorts of introductions and recommendations, begging for a job no matter how



unimportant, so long as it would enable them to take part in the pillage which the future held in store. Cicero was among them. Since his recent conversion he had somehow conceived the idea that Caesar had 'a special affection' for him. This authorized him—at least he thought so—to bombard the general with endless requests, and he finally succeeded in placing his brother Quintus as Caesar's legate, and in obtaining a post on his staff for an amiable good-for-nothing, C. Trebatius, who was to find a very personal way of distinguishing himself in his new office.

While covetousness and ambition were let loose in Rome, Caesar stayed on with his army. It was not until mid-winter, that is to say, January 54, that he went to Cisalpine Gaul to preside over the assizes. What were the reasons for this delay?

When he had determined upon his expedition to Britain he had thought that with two legions and a few hundred horsemen he would succeed in subduing the country in a matter of days. The reality had proved his calculations to be wrong, but his failure had not discouraged him in the least. Only, he understood that he would have to consider the project from another angle and employ much more far-reaching methods for carrying it out. His lucid and well ordered mind began to evaluate the three essential factors which had failed him in his previous attempt: time, manpower, shipping.

In opening the campaign in May, instead of at the end of August, he would have before him four months of summer weather suitable for operations at sea and permitting him to manoeuvre in enemy territory under good conditions, without being obliged to force a decision within a limited time. As for manpower, the numbers at his disposal, including legionaries, foreign mercenaries, troops conscripted from the occupied countries, hostages surrendered by subjected tribes—all these would enable him to correct his error of the year before and to fill the gaps which the previous enterprise had made apparent. There remained the problem of transport. That was where the principal difficulty lay. In this field everything was still to be done, and an immense effort of construction was required. His ships had returned in a pitiful state; a large number of them would have to be put out of action as they were not fit for the risks of another crossing. Moreover, experience had shown their great defect: as they were too high and unwieldy, it was difficult to drag them up on to the shore, and they had to remain at anchor, exposed to the changing winds. Again, if they were well adapted for bearing the weight

of the men who were crowded into them, they were too narrow to be used for transporting all the horses and pack animals which were to be taken over in considerable numbers (it was even proposed to include an elephant) in order to avoid the troubles caused by last year's negligence. Accordingly he had a new type of transport ship designed by his engineers and building started. The number estimated was six hundred. This was the task imposed upon his troops garrisoned throughout Belgic Gaul. Each conquered city was allotted a share of the work : for instance, the little tribe of the Meldi, living on the banks of the Marne, were alone to supply sixty ships fully equipped. Others found themselves obliged to repair the boats which had taken part in the previous expedition. Meanwhile the shipyards of the great ports of Spain were to furnish the parts which were not to be had on the spot. There were numerous private orders as well as the large official ones. The proposed expedition had attracted to Caesar's headquarters at Amiens a crowd of speculators and adventurers, determined to make the most of this opportunity to enrich themselves. Powerful individual capitalists and groups of financiers, specially formed for this purpose, were undertaking to provide at their own expense some of the ships which would bring back to the Continent looted riches and human cattle destined for the slave-market. The number of these booty ships which enlarged Caesar's fleet may be estimated at two hundred, bringing the total to about eight hundred vessels. Caesar had personally superintended the opening of all the workshops and shipyards, and it was not before he had convinced himself that they were working at full capacity that he set out for Cisalpine Gaul. He did not stay there long. Just as the legal session over which he presided was coming to an end, alarming news reached him from Illyricum : several wild tribes from northern Albania had appeared in the province and were devastating the border country. Caesar started off immediately. As soon as he arrived in Aquileia he ordered troops to be raised at the expense of the local cities and sent them against the Albanians. These measures caused the invaders' courage to give way. They offered their regrets and declared themselves ready to give Caesar whatever compensation he chose to ask. Caesar then proceeded in his usual way : he demanded reparation for the damage they had done and the surrender of hostages. He set a time limit. 'If you fail to carry out what you have promised there will be war,' he warned the offenders. They meekly obeyed on the appointed day.

Having settled this affair he returned to Gaul. During his absence, in spite of the dearth of raw materials, the construction programme was almost completed. On a tour of inspection he was able to see the excellent results which had been achieved. Caesar congratulated the soldiers 'and those who had directed their work', although he mentioned no one by name. Then he gave orders to concentrate everything—troops, ships, and material—at Boulogne, as had been done the year before.

Immediately, everything was on the move throughout Gaul. From all sides came the cohorts which had been dispersed all over the country. Convoys laden with provisions and food kept pace with them. The Seine was teeming with vessels making their way towards the river mouth. This was the moment Caesar had waited for . . . when suddenly complications arose.

The rumours of Caesar's forthcoming expedition to Britain had aroused certain hopes and ambitions among the subjugated peoples. Vague plans for an uprising were in the air. After two years of occupation the yoke which weighed upon them seemed too hard to bear and they thought that his absence, which could not now be long delayed, would afford them an opportunity of shaking it off by appealing to the Germans across the Rhine. Caesar's intelligence service reported in particular some secret negotiations between the Treveri<sup>171</sup> and their neighbours of the Rhineland. The attitude adopted by this tribe towards the Romans ever since their first appearance in Gaul is rather peculiar. They were among the first to show their desire to maintain good relations. The Treveri horsemen had fought in the ranks of Caesar's army during the Belgic campaign, but in the battle of the Sambre they also were the first to follow the panic-stricken servants and slaves in their flight. Since then they had remained aloof and had taken no part in the assemblies which were called in 56 and 55. Their reserved attitude had already aroused Caesar's suspicions at the time of his campaign against the Veneti, and it will be remembered that he was obliged to send them his faithful Labienus to 'hold them to their duty'.

Such contradictions and inconsistencies had their origin in the internal struggle which rent this people as well as so many other Gallic tribes. With the Treveri the conflict between the pro-Roman and the anti-Roman party had become particularly sharp because the respective leaders, who were closely related, had vowed mortal hatred towards each other. Indutiomarus was head of the anti-Romans. He

was a man of mature age and enjoyed great authority in the country. The Romanophiles had chosen as their chief his son-in-law Cingetorix, an ambitious young man, wholly devoted to the Roman cause and aspiring to supplant his father-in-law. Everything points to the fact that it was thanks to this enterprising son-in-law that the Romans learnt of the plots Indutiomarus was weaving. Caesar appeared to take such a serious view of the situation that he suddenly held up all preparations for his departure. He assembled four legions and eight hundred horsemen—or double the numbers he had employed the previous year for his expedition to Britain, and not trusting to any of his legates this time, personally conducted his army into the country of the Treveri, firmly resolved to nip in the bud this tentative revolt.

Then Indutiomarus threw off his mask and began to arm the country. As usual, all able-bodied men were called up to fight while the rest of the population were sent into safety. Cingetorix, instead of obeying his father-in-law's call, went to meet Caesar. A considerable number of leading Treveri, whom he had won over to the Roman cause, followed him. More and more isolated, Indutiomarus gave up all thought of battle and sent envoys to Caesar asking permission to come and give assurance of his unshakable loyalty. He received the requested authorization, together with a list of the two hundred hostages he was to bring with him. The names of his son and all his near relations headed it. It is to be supposed that in drawing it up Caesar had used the information given by Cingetorix. The latter, as a reward for his services, was promoted to the dignity of *persona grata* of the proconsul, but Indutiomarus was left in his official position as head of the Treveri. Evidently Caesar did not think that this was the time to make a radical change in the government of this people. All he wanted was to know that it would give no trouble. Moreover, Caesar had every reason to believe that a rebel who had failed would not be in a hurry to try again.

The whole affair is quite unimportant. We need not spend any further time on it, but it is an excellent illustration of Caesar's methods, showing his way of settling disputes and bringing local jealousies to an end, avoiding all violence if he thought such a policy was warranted.

When Caesar returned to Boulogne, convinced that now he would be able to embark without delay, he had to face an extremely unpleasant surprise. The sixty ships constructed by the Meldi, having made their way down the Marne and then the Seine, and having nearly finished their journey, were thrown back by a gale, and, powerless to

continue their course, had been forced to return to their starting-point. This upset all his calculations. He had to regroup his forces and material. Meanwhile a terrible north-westerly wind had begun to blow, which made it impossible to set out. Everything was at a standstill.

During these days of enforced idleness, Caesar's attention was attracted by the suspicious behaviour of the Aeduan chief Dumnorix who was at the camp leading a cavalry contingent provided by his country. There was every reason to mistrust him. Caesar could not have forgotten his seditious activities during the Helvetian campaign, and he must have clearly remembered that he had forgiven him solely at the insistence of his brother Divitiacus. It is to be supposed that he had given Caesar sufficient pledges of his loyalty, at least outwardly, since we find him placed at the head of the Aeduan government after Divitiacus had disappeared. He claimed, moreover, that he had succeeded in gaining Caesar's favour to such an extent that he soon would be proclaimed king of the Aedui. Perhaps when the vision of such a brilliant future was opening before him he may have been sincere in his attachment to Caesar, but when he saw that instead of reigning over his people he was called upon to fight against the Britons he changed his mind. At first he tried to plead. He asked Caesar, as a special favour, to leave him behind in Gaul, pretending 'that he was not accustomed to navigation', that 'he feared the sea', that 'his religious duties prevented him from leaving'. Caesar replied with a categorical refusal. Then Dumnorix turned his attention towards his compatriots and began to work upon the Gallic chiefs who were hanging about in the camp waiting for the wind to change. 'It was not without reason', he told them, 'that all the nobility of Gaul were being taken away.' According to him, 'Caesar, who did not dare to massacre them before the eyes of the Gauls, was transporting them to Britain so that they might perish there'. Instead of going off to be killed for the sake of the Romans in a strange land, it would be better to unite in a common effort to get rid of them on the spot. Some listened and followed him. Others went to denounce him to the Roman leader.

Caesar, who was waiting with feverish impatience for a favourable opportunity to start, did not want to strike openly and cause an incident which might at the last moment delay his enterprise still further. He merely arranged to have Dumnorix closely watched and saw to it that he was powerless to do any harm.

The day of departure so ardently desired arrived at last, and taking advantage of the wind which had just become favourable, Caesar gave orders to embark. Immediately there was feverish excitement everywhere. The men rushed to the boats, they loaded the baggage, they dragged the horses and pack animals on board; laboriously the elephant was hoisted up. Amidst the general confusion, Dumnorix signalled to his compatriots and furtively left the camp. His disappearance did not pass unnoticed, however. Caesar was informed. Without hesitation he suspended the departure at the last moment and, stopping everything, sent his horsemen after the fugitive. Dumnorix was to be arrested! If he offered resistance he must be killed! The orders were definite and the Dumnorix hunt began while Caesar, with most of his soldiers already aboard, waited for him to be brought back, dead or alive.

He did not have to wait long. Quickly overtaken by Caesar's horsemen, Dumnorix defended himself with desperation, 'shouting out over and over that he was free and belonged to a free people'. Abandoned by his followers, he was slain where he stood. The Aeduan horsemen sheepishly returned to Caesar.

The day was nearly over. The sun was going down. After a few last-minute instructions to Labienus, who was to watch over Gaul during his absence, Caesar weighed anchor. A slight south-westerly wind filled the sails and drove the ships gently towards the new adventure which was about to begin. Night was falling. The wind dropped. Caesar's fleet drifted with the tide and was carried farther and farther by the current. At daybreak they found they had passed the island and were in completely unknown waters, sailing north-east. Fortunately, by then the tide was going in the opposite direction and was bringing the ships towards the coast. They reached it at about noon. The beach was deserted and the landing was accomplished without incident.<sup>172</sup>

Caesar, basing what he says upon the alleged statements of prisoners—which must be taken for what they are worth—affirms that the Britons had been fully prepared to resist, but, 'frightened at the sight of so many ships . . . they had left the shore and had gone to hide in the hills'. This explanation, which may have been good enough for his contemporaries, does not strike us as particularly satisfactory. It is scarcely likely that the formidable preparations in which Caesar had been engaged quite openly for several months, and the equally formidable concentration of his naval forces in a port separated from

the island by barely thirty miles, could have escaped the notice of the Britons. They knew all about the operation, and the scale of his attack did not surprise them in the least. It was just because of their knowledge that they decided to use the only tactics which would be effective under such circumstances: as there could be no question of fighting with their primitive weapons against an enemy who had at his disposal such powerful and perfected armaments, the only thing to do was to avoid a battle, to let the Romans penetrate into the interior of the country and to harass them by strictly localized guerrilla warfare in the hope of wearing them out systematically. Bad weather would do the rest.

Caesar immediately guessed their intentions. There is no other way of explaining the haste with which he tried to make contact with the enemy and to force a battle. The disembarkation had taken all day. While it was going on Caesar inspected the shore to find a good place for his camp. A few natives caught by his scouts in the neighbourhood of the beach were brought to him. From them he learnt that the enemy was on the other side of a river, about ten miles away.

In spite of the lateness of the hour (it was past midnight), Caesar decided to march immediately to the attack, and leaving a guard of ten cohorts and three hundred horsemen with the ships, he set out. His guide was the young king of the Trinobantes, who was in exile, having been driven from his kingdom by his rival (we shall be hearing more about him later on), and who had sought refuge with the invader. All night they marched in the light of a full moon. They were going towards Canterbury, the capital of Kent. At dawn Caesar's legions had reached the Great Stour.<sup>178</sup> The Britons, who were occupying a hill on the other side, tried to prevent the Romans passing. Caesar's horsemen, who charged first, had no difficulty in pushing them back. The islanders gave in immediately and fell back towards a neighbouring wood which they had previously transformed into a sort of fortified camp. In order to dislodge them it was necessary to proceed to a regular siege. But it was impossible to capture them. Realizing that they were inferior in numbers, the Britons abandoned their position and withdrew still further. Night was coming on and Caesar did not want to risk travelling by such difficult lanes in the darkness. Next day he started again in pursuit of the foe. In the distance they could already see the enemy's rearguard, when messengers from the beach arrived with the news that during the night a violent gale had flung nearly all the ships upon the coast, breaking the cables and

tearing up the anchors. The fleet was as good as lost. It was a severe blow. Caesar bore it without faltering. Immediately, he cancelled his 'lightning offensive'. The advance guards, who were a considerable distance ahead of his troops, were recalled, and the whole army returned to the beach, now covered with the wreckage of the fleet which only the day before had been their pride. This misfortune must have been specially hard for Caesar to bear. Since his campaign against the Veneti he had constantly shown a lively interest in the things of the sea. The ships taking part in this expedition had been built and repaired according to his personal instructions. It was therefore his own work which had been shattered by the blind fury of the gale. But, all things considered, we must admit that Caesar himself was to some extent to blame. A similar catastrophe had occurred during the first expedition. Therefore the danger could have been foreseen and the strength of the cables tested. Above all, in the absence of any danger from enemy attack during the landing, he should have chosen a place of debarkation where the ships would have been less exposed to the changing winds. These precautions had been omitted. Now Caesar had to pay the price for his negligence.

He did not waste time in useless recriminations. He proceeded to make a careful inspection of the damaged ships in an endeavour to estimate the losses: the result did not appear to be completely disastrous. Forty vessels had to be definitely written off. With a great deal of effort the others might be reconditioned. He made up his mind immediately; he would suspend all military operations for the time being and concentrate wholly on repairs. So it came about that three days after their arrival on British soil, where such glorious opportunities for military exploits seemed to await them, Caesar's legionaries had to lay aside their military equipment and once more take up the tools they had been handling during the past months on the Continent. Specialists were needed; Caesar had them sent from Boulogne. Moreover, Labienus was given instructions to employ his troops over there for the construction of new ships to replace the lost ones. Finally, so as to run no further risks with the remainder of his fleet, Caesar did not hesitate to impose a crushing task on his soldiers: he had all the ships hauled on to dry land and enclosed with the rest of the camp inside a rectangle measuring about 1280 by 140 yards and surrounded by strong fortifications. The troops worked uninterruptedly day and night, for ten days on end. On the eleventh Caesar inspected this strange encampment, where ships and tents were



crowded together pell-mell, sheltered by ramparts risen from the ground as by a miracle. Then he gave orders to march, and the trench diggers of the previous day took up their helmets, their shields, and their swords, and returned to the sector where a fortnight earlier they had been preparing to attack the enemy. The Britons had made the most of the respite which the turn of events had granted them. Until then there had been little agreement between the various tribes : they had a common enemy, but in order to fight him they had all gone their own independent ways under their several chiefs. Now they realized that it was necessary for them to combine their forces under one leader and to entrust the direction of military operations to him.

This leader was Cassivellaunus, king of the Catuvellauni. His kingdom was situated in the neighbourhood of the modern St. Albans. He had conquered Imanuentus, the old king of the Trinobantes, whose son went to seek refuge with Caesar. At the time of Caesar's arrival Cassivellaunus was completing the seizure of the territory north of the Thames. The tribes living to the south, in Kent, were waiting apprehensively for their turn. They had no particular affection for the prospective master of their destiny, and there is every reason to believe that the nations he had subjected were equally unwilling to accept the yoke of his domination. But now, faced with the peril of foreign invasion, they wisely set aside their resentments and their bitterness and appointed him as their leader.

Profiting by the interruption of Caesar's military activity, he was able to bring up his reserves and to effect a junction with the warriors of Kent. It was no longer a confused crowd without order or discipline that awaited Caesar, but a regular army provided with four thousand war chariots, vehicles hitherto unknown to the Romans, and which can justly be considered to be the forerunners of the modern tank.<sup>174</sup>

True to his principles, as soon as Caesar made contact with the enemy he ordered his soldiers to dig trenches. The Britons, hidden in the forest, gave the Romans time to free themselves from their armour and baggage and to set to work. Then Cassivellaunus launched the attack. His massed war chariots swept aside the outposts protecting the teams of diggers and threw everything into confusion. Caesar, who notes in his *Commentaries* the 'disturbance' caused in the ranks of his army by this 'new kind of warfare', managed to ward off the danger by sending reinforcements to the weakening cohorts. As soon

as they arrived the charioteers turned and made off, disappearing into the depths of the forest as rapidly as they had come. Caesar did not dare pursue them.

He was able to gather some useful lessons from this first engagement. He saw that the heavy armour of his soldiers was a handicap in an offensive action against so mobile and adaptable an enemy, who could dodge attacks with such unequalled skill and rapidity. He therefore gave up all idea of taking the initiative, and from behind his fortifications raided the surrounding country for food, cattle, and prisoners, waiting for the Britons to come and attack him in his camp. Cassivellaunus had no intention of doing this. He had quickly realized the advantages of the tactics he had inaugurated, and went on harassing the enemy with surprise assaults from ambush. For Caesar, however, this situation could not go on indefinitely. It was not in order to remain cautiously on the defensive, almost under siege, that he had landed in Britain. He was obliged to act, for his time was limited by the changing season. He therefore decided to transfer operations into Cassivellaunus' own country, hoping thus to strike him a decisive blow. There was, however, one serious obstacle in the way: he would have to cross the Thames, which Cassivellaunus had tried to make impassable by driving pointed stakes into the bed of the river at the place where it was fordable. More stakes of the same kind protected the banks.

Established with all his army on the north side of the river, the British chief awaited the arrival of the Romans. Caesar was well aware of the difficulty of the operation. He solved it by resorting to a somewhat curious stratagem which Polyænus has described. Here it is:

Caesar had a very large elephant, an animal which the Britons had never seen before; he gave it an armour of iron scales, put a great tower furnished with archers and slingers on its back, and made it go forward into the river. The Britons were astounded at the sight of such an enormous beast, unknown to them and loaded with a tower whence came a volley of stones and arrows. Men, horses and chariots, they all turned tail and fled; and the Romans, through the terror inspired by a single animal, crossed the river in safety.<sup>176</sup>

Cassivellaunus would not engage in battle and withdrew. Once more his charioteers,<sup>176</sup> agile and elusive, started to harass the Romans.

Caesar himself has admitted that these tactics had such a demoralizing effect on his horsemen that they 'took from them all desire to venture into the distance'. He revenged himself by devastating and setting fire to the surrounding country. Time was passing, however, and he was no farther advanced. Soon it would be autumn. Only a few weeks were left to make an end of this inaccessible enemy. If he could not wipe them out within a month, he would be reduced to the choice of spending the winter on the island or returning to the Continent, in other words, abandoning his undertaking, a gesture which might have disastrous consequences for him.

The hope of a military victory was disappearing. Caesar accordingly tried to obtain one in the political field. The young Mandubracius of the Trinobantes had a certain number of supporters among his former subjects who were carrying on an active propaganda in favour of his recall. Instead of obeying an overbearing neighbour, greedy for his own advantage, they considered it preferable to have a tribal king, as before; all the more since, as their rightful ruler enjoyed the friendship and protection of the great Roman leader, it would be easy for them to obtain supremacy and to avenge themselves on the Catuvellauni. Their propaganda was successful. A deputation, supposedly expressing the unanimous decision of the Trinobantes, came to the Roman camp asking that their young king should be restored and that Caesar would vouchsafe to protect him against the violence of Cassivellaunus.

They obtained satisfaction. In exchange for the delivery of corn and a small number of hostages, Mandubracius was solemnly reinstated in his kingdom. Then the smaller neighbouring tribes followed the example of the Trinobantes and offered their submission to Caesar. Cassivellaunus became more and more isolated. He took refuge with his men in his fortified forest. From there he sent a message to the four kings of Kent. He suggested that while he kept Caesar occupied, they should attack the Roman camp from the rear. He hoped that when Caesar heard of this threat to his base he would go back to secure it. It was of no avail. The cohorts guarding the camp were quite capable of defending it alone and victoriously repulsed the attack. Caesar was able to throw all his forces against the fortress which sheltered the enemy. Once more the latter succeeded in getting away,<sup>177</sup> but this time he decided not to continue the struggle. The defeat of the Kentish troops did not fail to weaken his determination to resist. He appealed to Commius, that shrewd king of the Atrebrates,

who enjoyed the confidence of the Romans, asking him to act as intermediary between Caesar and himself.

Caesar eagerly seized upon this pretext. To keep up appearances he did not give in at once, and he imposed his conditions : hostages, payment of an annual tribute, and full security for Mandubracius and his people, who would now become, like the Aedui of Celtic Gaul and the Remi of Belgium, the leading nation in Britain. At all events, he did not waste any time over discussions. He contented himself with verbal assurances and the promises of Cassivellaunus to respect the terms of the treaty, and, after having received the requested number of hostages, he took his army back to the sea with the intention of leaving the island as soon as possible.

Then, the problem of transport arose. The number of ships left which were suitable for carrying his troops back to the Continent turned out to be inadequate. While he was engaged in operations against Cassivellaunus the workmen on the beaches had continued with the repairs, but their progress left much to be desired. The ships ordered from Labienus had not arrived. Obviously he had neither the drive nor the authority to increase the rhythm of production as his leader would have done. On the other hand, if contrary to expectations the booty seized appeared rather insignificant, the quantity of captured human cattle was considerable. In this way the load to be transported had increased perceptibly, while the shipping space had been greatly reduced. As he wanted to shorten his stay on the island as much as possible, Caesar decided to take his army back in two journeys. The ships of the first convoy crossed the Channel without incident. They started back to Dover immediately, followed by sixty of Labienus' boats which were at last ready to sail. A violent gale met them when they left the port and drove most of them back to the coast.

On the other side of the straits Caesar looked at the lashing waves. The equinox was approaching. Since the previous year he had learnt what that held in store for him. Then he no longer hesitated : the soldiers were piled on top of each other into what ships he had left, and the fleet of the Republic left the island one night when the waters were calm.<sup>178</sup>

*Ambiorix*

CAESAR returned to the Continent disappointed and worried. There was no disguising the fact that his second great project had failed. Moreover, the situation in Gaul was becoming more and more serious. Judging by his own account, this was his main reason for coming to terms with Cassivellaunus without demanding too much. Alarming rumours had reached him, confirmed by reports from his agents scattered throughout the conquered territory. The Gauls were in a state of unrest, and their spirit of rebellion had been greatly encouraged by his absence. The instability of his startling successes now became abundantly clear to him, and he realized that it was essential to take immediate action if he did not want to see the results obtained by dint of superhuman efforts during these four years vanish like smoke.

It was in this frame of mind that he once more set foot on Gallic soil. Messengers were awaiting his arrival bearing sad news. His only daughter, Pompey's wife, had died.<sup>179</sup> He had been deeply attached to Julia. He saw in her the image of someone else who had been the gentle companion of his youth; she reminded him of his old home, filled with the charm of smiling and beloved women. They had all gone now. . . . Nothing was left. Amid the austerity of his vast official residence, a lonely, joyless wife was wasting away in resigned expectation of a husband for ever absent, for ever wandering in the far places of the earth, searching ceaselessly for conquests without end or limit. . . .

Caesar received the melancholy news with a calm which greatly impressed his followers. Quintus Cicero, who was among them, wrote in a letter to his brother the orator of the 'courage' and the 'strength of spirit' which Caesar showed on this occasion. With perfect self-mastery he continued to superintend the entry of his ships into the port. When all his troops had disembarked and the fleet was safe, he left for Amiens, where he was to preside over the annual Gallic assembly.

Since the time just after Caesar's victory over the Helvetii, when

the Gallic chiefs had considered it necessary to ask his permission to meet in council, these assemblies had tended more and more to become mere formal gatherings serving to ratify the orders and decisions of the conqueror. They had, of course, dealt with local disputes as they arose from time to time, giving Caesar an opportunity to pose as mediator and to settle matters to suit his own interests. But they were primarily concerned with payments in kind, with collecting the sums due to Rome and with the billeting of troops garrisoned in different parts of the occupied territory who, as they were constantly increasing, added more and more to the number of mouths to be fed at the expense of the tributary cities.

In the year of 54 the harvest had been very poor, and the representatives of the Gallic nations whom Caesar had called to Amiens must have been anxiously wondering how far they would be expected to bear the heavy burden of supporting the army during the coming winter, and which of them would be called upon to do it. It is almost certain that the chief object of their meeting was to settle this problem.

According to Caesar, it was because of the bad harvest that he had made different arrangements for his troops this winter. Instead of concentrating them in a given sector, he scattered his legions, sending them in small groups all over the country : to the Morini at Boulogne (under C. Fabius) ; to the Bellovaci, probably at Montdidier (M. Crassus) ; to the Suessiones, at Soissons (L. Munatius Plancus) ; to the Remi at Mouzon (Labienus) ; to the Nervii, perhaps at Binche (Q. Cicero) ; to the Esubii at Séez (L. Roscius) ; to the Eburones at Tongres (Sabinus, with Cotta as his adjutant). Trebonius with his legion remained at Amiens to guard the staff headquarters.<sup>180</sup>

It is to be wondered whether Caesar's only motive was to divide the burden which the presence of his legions imposed on the population of Gaul. In that case it would have been more logical to send most of the troops into the regions least affected by the drought—to the south of the Seine and the Marne, for instance—instead of placing them throughout the whole land. An examination of their exact location, however, leads us to quite a different conclusion. Caesar's chief preoccupation seems to have been to establish observation posts and centres of supervision, whence punitive expeditions could be sent out to suppress the attempted local uprisings which he had every reason to fear. The very fact that he decided to prolong his stay in conquered Gaul until the legions were installed and the winter camps fortified, while urgent matters of domestic politics were

calling him back to Rome, is enough to prove it. In any case, he turned out to be right.

It began with a political murder committed in the territory of the Carnutes<sup>181</sup> who inhabited the Orleans plateau—dark, wild country at that time, covered with impenetrable forests, where the Druids in deepest mystery performed their sacred rites. In 57, after having crushed the Belgae, although, at least in theory this country still remained free, Caesar had put some of his troops there in winter quarters to keep an eye on the tribes which young Crassus had just brought to obedience. That, however, was not all. As was his habit, he intervened in the internal quarrels of the country and tried to settle them according to his own ideas. The Carnutes had recently deposed and driven out their chief, Targetius. Caesar, who needed someone devoted to him at the head of this people, reinstated him. For two years the Carnutes kept quiet and allowed this unwelcome personage to remain in power. Then, one September day in 54 he was slain by unknown hands. The assassins could not be found, but a great majority of the citizens approved of their act and declared themselves to be jointly responsible. The news reached Caesar when he had nearly finished installing his troops. He ordered Plancus to bring his legion with all haste from Soissons, and sent them to winter among the Carnutes with the mission of discovering the murderers and sending them to Amiens. During the following fortnight the placing of his legions was completed, and as soon as Caesar had received the reports of his legates telling him that these operations had been carried out without further incidents, he prepared for his own departure.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when the proconsul, who was about to leave his headquarters, was informed that a Gallic slave had arrived with a letter from Quintus Cicero.<sup>182</sup> When Caesar saw the exhausted messenger he had a gloomy presentiment. What he read threw him into the deepest consternation. The legate told him that for ten days he had been besieged by an army of sixty thousand rebels, that a great many of his soldiers were wounded, that they were reduced to a handful of defenders, and that if Caesar did not come to his help immediately it would be impossible for him to hold out. The slave, when questioned, explained to Caesar that he was by no means the first messenger Cicero had dispatched to his chief, but that all his predecessors had been intercepted and tortured, most of them before the eyes of the besieged. His master, a deserter from the rebel army, had promised him his liberty and a large reward if he would

undertake to carry the letter to Caesar ; he had accepted and succeeded in passing through the ranks of his compatriots without arousing their suspicions.

Immediately Caesar cancelled the orders for his departure. He was going to remain. Without knowing the details, without fully realizing what had happened, he had grasped the extent of the danger and had made his decision : he himself would go to the help of the besieged. Thereupon a series of urgent measures had to be carried out. The legion of Trebonius, left at Amiens, received orders to get ready to march : Caesar would command it in person. A courier went off post-haste to the Bellovac ; as soon as he received the message Crassus was to come with all speed to Amiens to replace the legion which was leaving. Another messenger was sent to Boulogne ; Fabius was to take his legion to the Atrebatés and there await Caesar. A third messenger was dispatched to the Remi ; if the situation allowed, Labienus was to take his troops to the frontier of the Nervii. A detachment of cavalry about four hundred strong was drawn from the neighbouring districts.

Late next evening Crassus received Caesar's letter. The order was final : the legion must leave immediately in the middle of the night. It left. Scouts sent to meet it brought news of its approach the next morning at eight o'clock. The march could therefore start.

Caesar was deeply disturbed when he left Amiens. At the last moment he had received a letter from Labienus containing news of an extremely serious nature which came to him as a complete surprise : the Roman troops sent to Aduatuca (Tongres) had all been massacred by the Eburones, including the two legates, Sabinus and Cotta. As for Labienus himself, he had to face very important forces of the Treveri who had risen in a body and had established themselves only three miles from his camp. He hoped to be able to resist them on his own, but there was no use counting on him for Caesar's expedition unless he left his sector totally undefended.

It was then that Caesar was able to gauge in an instant the immensity of the abyss which was suddenly opening before him. Suetonius tells us the blow was so severe that he would neither shave nor cut his hair (sparse as it was), as long as this disaster was unavenged.

The danger threatening him on this occasion was extremely serious. It was no longer a localized revolt which a few cohorts or a detachment of cavalry could wipe out. The movement seemed to have acquired the proportions of a general uprising and was spreading over the whole



occupied territory. The assassination of Targetius was merely an episode which marked the beginning of a preconcerted insurrection, and it must be admitted that Caesar himself had helped considerably to bring matters to a head. Very sure of his power, he had made a habit of using his former enemies and entrusting them with important positions, not only thinking that he had nothing further to fear from them, but imagining that this was a way of attaching them to his own destiny, so that it would be in their interest to justify his confidence by their loyalty. He had followed this course with Dumnorix, placing him at the head of his nation, in spite of all his plotting. We have seen how that ended. We have also mentioned the schemes of Indutiomarus. After the public humiliation inflicted on this old prince of the Treveri before all the dignitaries of his country, Caesar had allowed him to keep his former rank and prerogatives. In doing this he did not foresee that he was giving an enemy, who had vowed undying hatred towards him, an opportunity to start all over again. Ever since that time Indutiomarus had been secretly preparing with stubborn perseverance to have his revenge. It seems that he had managed to avoid taking part in the expedition to Britain. This gave him a chance to get the ground ready for future operations, while Caesar was carrying on his war on the other side of the Channel.

Learning of the poor results of that enterprise, he thought the time had come for him to act. The establishment of the Roman troops in their winter quarters was a good pretext. It enabled him to exploit the discontent of the population who resented having this expense thrust upon them. It also made it possible to attack the isolated legions one by one, instead of having to face the united block of the whole Roman army which experience had shown to be invincible.

He proceeded to carry out his plan. While the Treveri were being mobilized in order to attack the legion of Labienus garrisoned in their country, Indutiomarus circulated secret messages in the neighbouring territories calling on the Gallic peoples to rise against the arch-enemy. Ambiorix,<sup>188</sup> king of the Eburones, was the first to respond. He was a clever leader with plenty of cunning. At the beginning of the conquest he had been eager to offer his submission to the Roman commander and to promise him fidelity and obedience. He even contrived, so it seems, to render him certain services. This did not prevent him from detesting Caesar with all his heart, and ardently longing for his downfall.

When the troops of Sabinus arrived in his country he, together

with the chiefs of the region, received orders to go to the headquarters of the legion and to have the agreed quantities of corn delivered there. Ambiorix replied by calling his subjects to arms. Then he seized the convoys of timber destined for the Romans, and marched against the camp of Sabinus which the soldiers were fortifying. He did not attack, however, but contented himself with establishing a siege. Sparing the blood of his men, he preferred to resort to a somewhat crude and naïve ruse, typical of a barbarian, but calculated to take in a Roman legate.

He let Sabinus know that, out of gratitude for the benefits with which Caesar formerly had honoured him, he wished to spare the Romans from certain defeat. His only object was to preserve his country from a burdensome occupation. If Sabinus would agree to leave the land of the Eburones and go elsewhere, perhaps to join Cicero or Labienus, he would grant him a safe conduct through his territory. If not, in two days, supported by a powerful German army which had just crossed the Rhine, he would attack the camp and this would mean the total extermination of the Roman army.

After a lively discussion with his colleague Cotta and his officers, Sabinus, trusting the promise of Ambiorix, left the camp. Then the Eburones rushed out of their ambush and fell upon the Romans. Isolated attempts at resistance did not prevent the almost complete massacre of officers and soldiers. A handful of men managed to escape ; after wandering about in the woods they arrived eventually at the headquarters of Labienus and told him of the disaster. Caesar's letter must have reached him very soon afterwards. In his reply he informed his general of what he had just heard.

Ambiorix did not waste time after wiping out the legion of Sabinus. He marched immediately against the neighbouring army, that of Cicero. Two days later, his warriors, joined by the Aduatuci and the Nervii—who had an old score to settle with Caesar—appeared before the Roman camp and started to besiege it.<sup>184</sup> The king of the Eburones hoped to use the same stratagem which had succeeded so well with Sabinus. Cicero, however, was more prudent. He refused all compromise and began to organize his defence, resolved to hold out against an enemy a dozen times superior in numbers, until help came. This was the state of affairs when he sent his appeal to Caesar.

The latter rushed his legions along the road from Amiens to Bavai. After Bapaume he had entered the territory of the Nervii. Prisoners told him that Cicero's position had become still more critical. It

was to be feared that he might be forced to give up at the last moment. Then it occurred to Caesar that it might encourage Cicero and his soldiers if they knew relief was on the way. He accordingly sent a brief message. As quoted by Polyænus, it sounds very laconic : 'Caesar to Cicero. Courage, await help.'

According to the *Commentaries*, it also must have contained some further sentences announcing that Caesar 'was on the way with his legions and would soon be there' and exhorting Cicero 'not to lose heart'.

The problem was how to get this letter to its destination. A trustworthy man had to be found. The messenger Cicero had sent did not inspire him with full confidence. 'He feared', says Dion Cassius, 'that out of sympathy for his own people this slave might cause some harm to befall the Romans.' He preferred to use a free man. Among the Gallic horsemen in his army there was one who accepted the mission. Again, in this case, however, Caesar took precautions. 'He gave him no verbal information,' the same author reports, 'but wrote down in Greek all he wanted to communicate to Cicero.' In Greek? Let us rather say, in Greek characters.<sup>185</sup> Caesar, knowing how easily the letters he sent to his agents and assistants could be intercepted, had made a habit in certain cases of employing a sort of secret code known only to some of his close associates, but of which Dion Cassius claims to have the key. It consisted of substituting the first letter of every word by the one which was the fourth after it in the alphabet. He also had foreseen that his messenger might not be able to get to Cicero. In that case he was to fasten the letter to the strap of his javelin and throw it into the besieged camp. Actually, this is what the Gaul did, either because it was really impossible for him to reach his objective or merely because he did not want to run too great a risk.

As luck would have it, the javelin he threw stuck in the side of a tower of the Roman camp. It was not until three days later that a soldier noticed it, wrenched it down and took it to Cicero. While he was reading the message to his astonished legionaries, the smoke rising from nearby fires proclaimed Caesar's arrival as imminent.

Ambiorix heard the news from his scouts at about the same time as the Romans in the camp. Thereupon he raised his siege and marched with all his forces to meet Caesar. The movement of his troops did not escape Cicero, who hastened to warn his chief. Caesar heeded the warning. He had in all some seven thousand men against the sixty thousand of the enemy. He proceeded with intelligence and

extreme caution. A camp was established on a hill and confined to a very small space. This, Caesar says, was done 'to make it appear that he had no soldiers, that he was tired from his journey and that he was afraid of being attacked by the barbarians'. The ruse succeeded. Ambiorix thought that he had to deal with only a few miserable cohorts and went to the assault without any precautions whatsoever. Caesar let him come right up to the camp. Then he ordered his soldiers to rush out from all the gates and threw his cavalry into the fray. 'The enemy was routed, and under such conditions that not one of them could resist', it is stated in *Commentaries*. Caesar did not pursue them. He did not want to venture into the woods and marshes. Besides, he was in a hurry to join Cicero. So he went straight to the camp, arriving in the early afternoon. As he came up to the fortified enclosure he saw the various contrivances Ambiorix had built for carrying on the siege. He surveyed them with astonishment and not without a certain uneasiness. Until now he had never met with anything like this among his enemies. These were the same barbarians who, scarcely a year before, had viewed the towers constructed by the Romans with a terror amounting to panic, attributing to them a supernatural origin. Now they were making towers of the same sort themselves and using them against the Romans! Had they changed their methods of warfare, and had they been studying in the conqueror's school? That is what Caesar cannot have failed to ask himself.

Cicero was radiant with joy when he saw his chief and liberator, and took him to review his legion. Caesar moved slowly down the ranks, one by one; he noticed the wounded, listened to the tales of individual bravery, and distributed congratulations and rewards. All that constituted the pleasanter part of his task. The other came next, and it was painful and disheartening. Caesar was anxious to learn the full story concerning the massacre of Sabinus' army. So far he only knew it in its barest outline through the message of Labienus. Now he began to interrogate prisoners, and from their reports the whole lamentable affair soon stood out in all its tragic details. That was enough for him. The damage was done and the man who was responsible had escaped punishment by his death. He felt, nevertheless, that this catastrophe might have a bad effect on the morale of his soldiers. He wanted to explain to them personally the causes of the disaster, and so the troops were assembled on the following day to hear Caesar's speech. Once again, it is to be regretted that he did not

preserve the entire text of his oration. All we have is the brief fragment found in the *Commentaries*. However, it is enough to show the position Caesar adopted on this occasion. He did not hesitate to charge the leader with the full responsibility. 'The disaster is due to the mistakes and the carelessness of a legate,' he declared. On the other hand, he made a point of paying tribute to the courage of the soldiers, and knew how to flatter the self-esteem of his listeners. The outrage had been avenged 'thanks to their vigilance'. It is true that he also acknowledged his indebtedness to the 'protection of the immortal gods', but this seems to be only one of those oratorical phrases with which he liked to adorn his speeches on great occasions. After that he sent Fabius back to the Boulogne country and he himself returned to Amiens, taking Cicero's legion with him.

Although the autumn was nearly over, he did not think of leaving. The gravity of the recent events prompted him to stay with his army during that winter. A passage in the *Commentaries* explains the motives for his decision: 'As the news of the disaster in which Sabinus met his death continued to spread, nearly all the cities of Gaul were speaking of war; they were sending private messengers and envoys in every direction to obtain information about each other's plans, and where the uprising was to start; meetings were held at night in lonely places. During the whole winter Caesar could scarcely be said to have had a moment's respite: he was constantly receiving news about the schemes of the Gauls and the revolt for which they were preparing.'

We cannot over-estimate the importance of these lines. They give us a glimpse of the conquered country in a state of ebullition, feverishly seething under the iron rule of the conqueror. It was scarcely three years since these same people had rushed into his arms with a kind of rapture, and now they were showing the same ardour in their eagerness to break the bonds they had formerly welcomed. 'Really, these Gauls. . . .' Caesar must have thought to himself, and he noted down bitterly on his writing-tablets this disillusioned comment: 'These people change their minds easily and are nearly always seduced by something new.'

This time the conflagration started among the Senones, 'one of the most powerful of the Gallic peoples, who enjoyed great authority among the others'.<sup>186</sup> They inhabited the region of Auxerre and Sens. As in many other instances, Caesar, once master of their country, had dethroned their king Moritasgos and had replaced him by a sovereign of his own choice who happened to be the deposed monarch's own

brother. The Senones do not seem to have at all appreciated this new king imposed on them by the conqueror. They met in council and, at the instigation of one of their chiefs, Acco, decided to depose Caverinos (the king in question) and to put him to death. However, he was cautious enough to flee in time, and took refuge with Caesar. Acco was chosen in his place.

This was a serious challenge to the prestige of Roman authority. The Senones were the first to realize it. They sent a deputation to Caesar to justify their conduct. He was not satisfied by their explanations and demanded that their entire Senate should present itself in his camp. The Senones made no move. This refusal to obey was equivalent to an act of outright defiance: it could be the signal for revolt. And indeed, this is how the whole country interpreted the arrogant attitude of the Senones towards the conqueror. Here again we can leave the description to Caesar. 'The impression on these barbaric minds was so strong,' he writes, 'it resulted in such a change of heart in all the peoples, that except for the Aedui and the Remi . . . there was scarcely a city which did not give us cause for suspicion.'

Indutiomarus, the chief of the Treveri, who had been champing at the bit ever since his recent humiliation at Caesar's hands, thought that his time had come. For months he had been beseeching the Germans to cross the Rhine and complete Caesar's defeat which, in his opinion, was as good as half accomplished since the destruction of the army of Sabinus. All his efforts, in spite of the tempting promises to share in the pillage, were in vain. The people on the right bank of the river were not keen to measure their strength once more against the Roman legions. They had had enough of such adventures after the double experience of Ariovistus and the Usipetes. In no way discouraged, Indutiomarus persevered with his propaganda among his immediate neighbours. There he found much more co-operation. He also appealed to all exiles and outlaws, to all, in fact, who were persecuted under the Roman rule. 'Such was his credit in Gaul as a result of these steps,' writes Caesar, 'that envoys came running to him from all sides asking, for private or official reasons, for the favour of his friendship.' Thereupon Indutiomarus judged that the time had come to pass on to action. He declared before the general assembly of his armed compatriots that his son-in-law Cingetorix was a traitor to the country. And then—in close contact with Ambiorix, who since his defeat before Cicero's camp was burning with a desire for revenge—he began his march against Labienus,

whose ever-vigilant commander had placed him as an observer at the frontier of the Treveri country.

Caesar's legate, warned in time by the devoted Cingetorix, handled the situation very skilfully. Judging that the entire attempt depended solely upon the energy and will of one man, he aimed first and foremost at Indutiomarus himself. Huge rewards were promised to those who should kill him. There were no paid assassins among the followers of the old chief, but one day, when he and his horsemen had come too close to the Roman camp, Labienus launched a sudden attack upon them. He had issued specific orders : aim only at Indutiomarus, do not strike anybody else before you have slain him. To facilitate the task several infantry cohorts were sent forward to draw off the main body of the enemy forces while the pursuit of the hunted chief was going on. I will borrow Caesar's account of the outcome of this ' battle '. ' Fortune justifies the expectations of human intelligence: as all are chasing one single man, Indutiomarus is captured as he is crossing the ford of a river ; he is killed and his head brought back to the camp.'

The murder of Indutiomarus had an immediate effect. The troops of Ambiorix, which were to have co-operated with him, brought their advance to a complete standstill and dispersed. The Treveri went straight back to their homes. This gave Caesar a breathing-space. But he had no illusions about the duration of the lull. Accordingly he did not fail to push on his preparations with great energy. Through the catastrophe at the camp of Sabinus, twenty cohorts had been eliminated. The losses in Cicero's legion were also considerable. Moreover, he not only needed to replace what was lost but to increase his forces. Caesar therefore proceeded to raise fresh troops. Once more the hard-working population of Cisalpine Gaul had to provide soldiers. His legates—M. Silanus, C. Antistius Reginus, and T. Sextus—recruited some ten thousand men there, which enabled him to form two more legions, the Fourteenth and Fifteenth. He also appealed to the ' friendship ' and ' patriotism ' of Pompey, who obligingly sent him a third, taken from those assigned to himself. In this way three new legions came to swell the ranks of Caesar's army during January and February of 53.

It was not that he was seeking numerical superiority. He knew quite well that he could never achieve that, but he wanted to impress the Gauls by showing them that the reserves of the Republic were inexhaustible and ' permitted him not only to restore his losses promptly

in case of reverses, but to be even better provided with troops than before'. 'He showed then', the *Commentaries* add, 'what the organization and the resources of the Roman people could do': *quid populi romani disciplina atque opes possent*.

The winter was coming to an end. Spring was near. Following the rule he himself had established, Caesar convoked the annual general assembly of the Gallic peoples. They all sent representatives, except the Senones, the Carnutes, and the Treveri. He noticed specially those that were absent. So much so, that when the deputies had assembled in his camp he told them in brief but no doubt very expressive terms—surrounded by his troops armed and ready to march—that he interpreted this absence as the beginning of an open revolt deserving exemplary punishment which must be inflicted swiftly. That was why the meetings of the assembly were suspended until the end of hostilities. Then the deputies would be convoked again and must come to Lutetia, the town of the Parisii, where the next session would be held. This having been said, the soldiers were given orders to march, and with Caesar at their head, they set out towards the country of the Senones.

Acco, the new chief of this people, tried to organize the defence. He started a little too late. The concentration of all the civilians in the fortified places, which he had ordered, was still going on when the Romans were upon them. The Senones did not even try to put up a resistance. They made known to Caesar through the intermediary of the Aedui that they capitulated utterly and entirely and offered him their apologies. These Caesar accepted, and he did not wait to seek out the culprits, judging that 'the season was not suitable for making investigations but must be used for war'. Moreover, he took his precautions: a hundred hostages and the surrender of the rebellious chief. The trial of the responsible individuals would take place later on.

The Carnutes, hearing of the collapse of the Senones, followed their example and capitulated in their turn. The Remi undertook to plead their cause before Caesar and implored him to be lenient towards those 'misguided wretches'. They received a similar answer. The hostages of the Carnutes joined those of the Senones and their 'responsible individuals' were handed over just as those of their ephemeral allies had been.

Thus, with breath-taking rapidity, Caesar put out two smouldering revolts which had threatened to cause serious damage. Next he went



to Lutetia, where the Gallic delegates were awaiting him. It was during the last days of March 53 that Caesar for the first time came to the city which was to become Paris. Unfortunately he gives no details about his visit, which incidentally must have been very brief. The meeting was merely a conclusion of that meeting which had opened in the camp of Amiens, and this 'closing session' seems to have been no more than a simple notification to the cities represented of the size of the military contingents they were required to provide at that time.

Now Caesar was going to start on the most important part of the war: his campaign against Ambiorix.<sup>187</sup> He had already come to know the energy and initiative of this leader when he marched to the aid of Cicero. Above all, the massacre of Aduatuca called for revenge.

The king of the Eburones was in a particularly favourable position. On his right, he could communicate along a continuous line of forests and marshes with those irreducible Menapii, 'the only people of Gaul who had never sent ambassadors to Caesar to negotiate a peace'. On his left, he joined hands with the Treveri, who, faithful to the memory of Indutiomarus, had chosen a member of his family as their leader and were waiting only for an opportunity to resume the struggle. Through their mediation Ambiorix finally succeeded in concluding an alliance with the Germans of the Rhineland. Caesar decided that before attacking this redoubtable enemy he must deprive him of his allies and supporters, and cut off all his means of retreat. As it was, Ambiorix, if defeated, could always take refuge in the impassable territory of the Menapii or cross over to the Germans on the other side of the Rhine.

The plan adopted for this campaign is one of the most wisely considered and carefully prepared among all those which military history has credited to Caesar. The theatre of operations was divided into three sectors. The central one, that of Ambiorix himself, was left alone for the time being. All efforts were focused on the eastern and western flanks: the Treveri and the Menapii. This resulted in two separate fronts. The Rhine sector was considered the most important and called for a concentration of strong forces. Here it was to be anticipated that the Germans would come to the support of their neighbours and allies. It was precisely because of the importance of this front that Caesar did not at first make an attack there. He contented himself for the moment with strengthening his defences in the region by sending two additional legions and an abundant supply of ammunition.

and provisions as well as the baggage of the whole army. Labienus, who was in command there, received his instructions : to undertake no offensive operations and to maintain the position of a careful observer, with his weapons ready to hand. It was in the west, where the enemy was weakest, that Caesar began. He opened the first phase of the war by attacking the Menapii with the five legions he had kept near him which were to constitute a formidable instrument of war, both flexible and strong, enabling him to strike successively in all directions.

Caesar's army was divided into three columns : one under his personal command, the other under C. Fabius, and the third under the elder Crassus. They entered the country in three different places, crossing on bridges put up in no time by his engineers. Orders had been given to set fire to everything, and the Roman legions went forward by the undying light of an immense conflagration, seizing all that came their way : men, animals, provisions and forage. The fierce Menapii could not hold out against the triple avalanche which was descending upon them and, for the first time since hostilities opened in Gaul, they gave in and asked for peace. Caesar stated his conditions and warned them ' that he would consider them as enemies if they received Ambiorix or his representatives on their soil '. The terrorised Menapii swore loyalty and obedience. Thus Caesar closed the right-hand door by which his enemy might escape. Now he was to deal with the other. On his way eastwards, leaving the conquered country under the care of Commius, his devoted Atrebas, he marched against the Treveri.

While Caesar's offensive was going on in the west, this tribe had assembled considerable forces of cavalry and infantry. They were however delaying their attack until the arrival of the troops promised by their friends and allies across the Rhine. In spite of his orders, Labienus resolved to force a battle before this happened. He simulated a hasty retreat which made the Treveri think that the Roman army was in full flight and could be easily defeated without additional help. The battle began on ground which was definitely unfavourable to the assailants. Labienus made the most of his opportunity by throwing in all his troops. The Treveri, who were not expecting to be faced with an enemy all prepared for battle, were beaten from the start. They reached the neighbouring forests and announced their submission to Labienus. When the Germans, who had just arrived, learnt of the defeat of the Treveri, they returned to their country.

The cousin and successor of Indutiomarus went with them, taking all his family. Only the son-in-law, Cingetorix, remained. He did not have to regret his decision ; as a reward for his devoted constancy Caesar invested him with all civil and military authority in the country.

Thus the second campaign was finished almost before it had begun. When Caesar arrived on the spot, he found the task accomplished. What was he going to do next ?

Once more he was on the banks of the great river which separated him from those terrible lands where his work had almost foundered two years before. If he had wanted to keep to the original plan of campaign, now that the two flanks were crushed, he should have brought all his forces to bear upon the centre. Profiting by the isolation of the Eburones since the defeat of their two allies and accomplices, he should have attacked Ambiorix himself, who was still his principal enemy. He did not do this. Leaving Ambiorix alone, Caesar crossed the Rhine for the second time.<sup>188</sup>

Historians have found it very awkward to explain this decision. So, for that matter, did Caesar. According to him, he made it 'for two reasons : first, because the Germans had sent help to the Treveri against him, and, in the second place, so that Ambiorix should not find refuge among them'. In other words, it was an expedition with a dual purpose, punitive and preventive, that he proposed to carry out. Camille Jullian attributes it to a longing, suddenly aroused by this new contact with German soil, 'to achieve superhuman victories over the barbaric peoples', and making him 'forget Ambiorix and his vengeance'. J. Carcopino, while protesting against this interpretation, considers that, if Caesar wanted to act consistently, he was obliged 'before bringing the full force of his troops against the Eburones, to separate them by terror and isolation from any help the Germanic tribes might eventually afford'.<sup>189</sup> It would be easy to reply that such help had been rendered impossible by the crushing defeat of the Treveri. In order to reach Ambiorix, the Germans would now be obliged to overcome the resistance of the Roman troops who were establishing themselves firmly in the country they had just seized ; and in order to bring about the isolation of the Eburones, Caesar only had to reinforce the cordon formed by his garrisons along the left bank of the Rhine.

Nevertheless, I believe it is possible—without going any further than the *Commentaries*—to find an explanation which reflects his intentions more accurately. From a careful reading of section IX,

6-8, of the sixth book, it appears that his original intention was to punish the Ubii, for he had been erroneously informed that they had come to help the Treveri. We cannot otherwise explain the attitude which the Ubii adopted as soon as Caesar once more set foot on their soil. 'They sent him envoys to justify themselves', it is said in the *Commentaries*. 'They declared that the help sent to the Treveri did not come from them, that it was not by them that the oath of fidelity had been broken; they implored Caesar to spare them and not to confuse . . . the innocent with the guilty.'

Caesar was suspicious. He did not believe them. However, in an attempt to be fair, he proceeded to conduct an inquiry which showed that, as a matter of fact, it was not the Ubii but the Suebi who had come to assist the Treveri. It was, therefore, not this weak little tribe of Rhinelanders that had to be 'chastised', but the formidable block of a nation which had forced him to withdraw two years previously. Was he prepared to attack it this time? That was the question he had to consider. Moreover, the Suebi, on learning of the reappearance of the Roman conqueror on the banks of the Rhine, reacted exactly as they had the first time: total mobilization, complete evacuation of the civilian population, concentration of all fighting forces in a central zone destined to become the theatre of future military operations, etc. As soon as Caesar heard of these preparations, his clear judgment gave him the answer: he did not have the necessary means for engaging in a gigantic war which, comparatively speaking, would make all his previous battles look like child's play. What, then, was he to do? Simply to take his troops back to the left bank would have been to compromise still further the prestige which his retreat in the year 55 had perceptibly lowered. He therefore took a middle course: namely to test the fortune of arms (he liked this expression) without venturing into the heart of the enemy country. He would not fly from the enemy. Established in the coastal region, protected by entrenchments, supported by fortified cities, with a bridge behind him which if necessary ensured an easy way of retreat, he determined to carry on a sort of defensive war calculated to wear out the enemy's strength. The measures which he ordered are a clear indication that he was preparing to sustain a regular siege. For instance, the country people among the Ubii were told to leave their farms with their cattle and all their possessions and to barricade themselves in the towns. Their grain was to be requisitioned for the army. Unfortunately, the deliveries did not come up to Caesar's expectations. He preferred to

attribute this to the fact that 'agriculture was greatly neglected among all the Germans'.

The chief, or chiefs of the Suebi (we do not know their names), who were directing military operations, did not allow themselves to be caught in Caesar's trap. Their plan was to draw the Romans as far away as possible from their base. That was why they gave up all idea of an offensive and withdrew of their own accord into the depths of the forests of Thuringia where, abundantly supplied with provisions, they waited for Caesar's arrival. When he heard of their move, he understood that there was nothing left for him but to leave—and he left.<sup>190</sup>

This time, the bridge was not destroyed. Caesar only cut that part which touched the bank of the Ubii. At the end of the stump which remained embedded in the middle of the river he raised a tower four stories high: a perpetual reminder of his passing, and a permanent threat of his return.

It was now the month of August. The corn was beginning to ripen. Scarcely had Caesar arrived when he started off again from the land of the Treveri across the interminable forest of the Ardennes in pursuit of Ambiorix. He wanted to have done with him and his 'accursed race'. After the brief German interlude a violent destructive fury took possession of his whole being. It was less a war that he was contemplating than the thorough extermination of a whole nation. He was going to adopt the same tactics of sweeping invasion which had succeeded so well against the Menapii. The army was divided into three groups of three legions each. Labienus' division was to go westwards to that part of the country which bordered on the territory of the Menapii; that of Trebonius was sent to ravage the land next the Aduatuci. Caesar in person led the third division towards the extreme end of the Ardennes where, according to information he had received, Ambiorix had taken refuge after the rout of his troops. A cavalry corps preceded him, specially entrusted with the manhunt. The duration of the campaign was decided in advance: seven days. They would not therefore burden themselves unnecessarily. The baggage was left in the camp at Aduatuca, guarded by a legion of recruits under the command of Q. Cicero. The soldiers carried only such provisions as were strictly necessary. Then the torrent started. Moving walls of smoke and flame followed close upon the heels of the terrified inhabitants, who fled in all directions. The scourge continued over a

dead and deserted land. It was no longer against men that Caesar was making war ; but against earth, vegetation, water, and stones. He realised this and it left him perplexed. In order to achieve the extermination of this ' accursed brood of the Eburones ', it would be necessary to split up the army into an infinite number of small units, thus exposing them to the danger of surprise attacks. To spare his soldiers, Caesar resorted to a very expeditious method. He invited all the tribes to come to the pillage of the Eburones. Messages were sent to the neighbouring cities asking them to help in the sacking of Ambiorix's country and hinting that they might expect rich booty. He has stated his reasons with laudable frankness in the *Commentaries* : ' Caesar preferred to expose the Gauls rather than his own legionaries to the dangers of this forest warfare.'

Confident of the success of this expedient, Caesar let matters take their course and went to Aduatuca, where he had planned to meet his two legates. On his arrival he found the vicinity of the camp completely devastated, with hundreds of dead and wounded, the soldiers terrified, the officers in a state of consternation. In amazement, Caesar questioned them. They answered that the Germans had been there.

The Sugambri—that German tribe which, in defiance of his will, had sheltered the horsemen of the Usipetes after their escape from the massacre in 55—had learnt from their neighbours of Caesar's invitation and determined to take their part of the loot. Thereupon they crossed the river on boats and rafts some twenty-five miles below the place where Caesar had erected his gigantic tower (thus, it might be said in passing, showing its complete ineffectiveness). Once on the left bank, they pushed forward in the direction of the country of the Eburones, gathering as they went straggling fugitives in search of a refuge. As they had no desire whatever to meet with Caesar, they did not fail to question the captured prisoners as to the exact whereabouts of the Roman army and the movements of its leader. In this manner they learnt that Caesar had gone off, no one knew where, and that his troops were somewhere far away. At the same time it was suggested to them that instead of travelling mile after mile in search of a miserable prey, whose capture was by no means certain, they would do better to avail themselves of the windfall which was within easy reach. They could be at Aduatuca in three hours. There, the Roman army had heaped up all its wealth, in charge of ' so feeble a troop that it could not even man the wall '. The Germans were

quick to grasp the possibilities of this suggestion. The nationality of their future victims mattered little to them ; Romans would do just as well as Eburones. It was the quantity of the booty that counted, and since there was such an abundance of it quite near at hand, it was better to make the most of this opportunity rather than to wade through the marshes for days on end and run the risk of coming upon Caesar or one of his legates. Therefore, with their judicious advisers serving as guides, they marched straight to Aduatuca.

The German horsemen appeared before the camp at the moment when half the troops responsible for guarding it were in the fields requisitioning supplies. Their sudden arrival produced an indescribable panic. The Romans all lost their heads. Amid the general confusion the rumour spread that Caesar had been killed. If the barbarians were there, it must mean that the whole Roman army was wiped out, and the superstitious among them recalled the massacre of Sabinus' troops, which had taken place on the same spot. After the arrival of the reaper cohorts, who had to fight their way back, resistance became more or less organized, and finally the Germans were driven back and obliged to make off.<sup>191</sup>

Caesar received the news with philosophical calm. ' Fortune plays a great part in matters of war ', he later wrote concerning this episode. He had a few words of criticism for Cicero,<sup>192</sup> who should not have left the camp undefended, and with evident pleasure he noted a fact which apparently he found amusing : ' The Germans, whose object it was to ravage the territory of Ambiorix, brought him very valuable assistance by attacking the camp of the Romans.'

As for Ambiorix himself, it was impossible to capture him. Helped by innumerable accomplices among the country people, who detested the Romans, he was able to find a sure hiding-place whenever or wherever he wanted and was warned in advance if his pursuers came near. At last Caesar was obliged to give up and to leave Ambiorix to his wandering existence with its hopes and dreams of revenge. He took his army back to Durocortorum (Rheims), where the Gallic nations had been convoked once more for a general assembly. In the place of the king of the Eburones, another rebel chief was to undergo the punishment prepared by the conqueror : Acco, leader of the Senones. Before the representatives of all the peoples of enslaved Gaul, grouped in front of his tribunal, Caesar appeared—the living incarnation of the inexorable Roman law which knows no pity for traitors and rebels. Accused of having instigated the conspiracy

against the authority of the Roman victor, Acco was condemned to death, and because his example was to serve as a wholesome lesson, Caesar restored the ancient procedure of a degrading execution. He was stripped and bound to a stake. His head was held in a fork and he was beaten with rods until he was dead. Then they beheaded his corpse.

Others arrested for the same reason were to have a similar judgment. They were able to escape the penalty by flight. It is a very significant thing that these prisoners, who were kept under the strictest guard, should all have succeeded so well in getting away. It shows how greatly the Romans had come to be hated in the country. It only remained for Caesar to pronounce the terrible and solemn formula forbidding them water and fire—a proclamation which incidentally had not the slightest effect in a country where the fugitives could rely upon the most extensive and generous help from the entire population.



*Vercingetorix*

THE Gallic chiefs were filled with consternation as they watched the agony of their compatriot. Then they went their ways, each to his own city, with this unfading vision of horror ever before them. As for Caesar, he considered that his task in conquered Gaul was finished for the time being. None too sure of the apparent submission of the Senones, he established the main body of his troops (six legions) in their country at Sens, which became his headquarters from that time. The four other legions were sent to the frontier of the Treveri country and to the central plateau of Langres, which was of major strategic importance and was inhabited by the Lingones.

After having thus placed his troops, Caesar started for Cisalpine Gaul. He went there 'to preside over the assizes, as usual', he says. He was particularly anxious to establish closer contact with his agents and collaborators in Rome. While he had been detained in Gaul during the preceding winter, he had rather neglected political affairs at home. They were in great need of attention. During the year 53 Caesar's position on the political scene had definitely weakened. The famous triumvirate, which constituted the main element of his power, no longer existed since the death of Crassus in the country of the Parthians (May 28, 53). In this triple alliance 'the richest of all the Romans' favoured Caesar's views rather than those of Pompey, which made it easy for Caesar to have his way in case of disagreement. Now there were only the two men left face to face, two rivals becoming more and more estranged. The sentimental link, effective enough in the case of Pompey, had disappeared since the death of Julia. Political interests alone counted, and Caesar's harmonized less and less with Pompey's. While the one was forging his career on the battlefield, the other was shaping his in the crowded Forum. During the last few years Pompey had made considerable progress in the art of pleasing the multitude. He had finally managed to impose himself as master with almost unlimited powers so that, in effect, he exercised supreme authority in the Republic. As for Caesar, the public was disappointed. The year 55 had brought grandiose promises, their

realization in 54 had been uninspiring, and in 53 there was disillusionment and anxiety. It was time something was done.

Established at Ravenna, close to the Italian frontier, Caesar renewed his contact with political life. Shortly after his arrival he heard that his devoted agent Clodius had been killed in a violent scuffle. Following the murder, serious unrest broke out in Rome. The city was in a state of anarchy. To restore order they resorted to an old and tried method : a dictator was to be put in charge and Pompey was proposed for the office. The senatorial party took up the idea and supported his candidature. Then another plan was suggested : no dictatorship, but instead a single consul, and all the powers inherent in such an office would be centralized in his hands. How did this idea start ? It is hard to believe that it was not known to Caesar. Since his last punitive expedition he considered Gaul to be definitely ' reduced to a state of rest ', and the prospect of becoming the supreme master of Rome cannot have failed to attract him. He was always in a great hurry when it came to satisfying his ambition. If formerly in Spain he had not had the patience to wait four months for the end of his quaestorship, how could he resign himself now to wait the remaining four years of the prescribed ten which legally separated him from the consulship ? The law was against him, no doubt, but with a little good will it would not be difficult to find suitable precedents, and then . . . what valuable time would have been gained, what obstacles avoided !

The senators thus found themselves in a dilemma : they had to choose between the dictatorship of Pompey and the consulship of Caesar. ' Fearing both these nominations ', writes Dion Cassius, they pronounced themselves in favour of a neutral solution which, while avoiding a dictatorship, blocked the road for Caesar. Pompey should be nominated as sole consul and should have the right to choose himself an associate. Dion Cassius explains very pertinently the intention and significance of this manoeuvre. ' As Pompey was less eager than Caesar to win the favour of the people, the Senate flattered itself that it could detach him completely from them and enlist him for its own interests. This is what happened : proud of this new and quite exceptional honour, Pompey no longer proposed any measures calculated to please the populace and scrupulously carried out everything which could give satisfaction to the Senate.'

Caesar at first tried to renew the bonds of kinship which had united him to Pompey. He offered him his sister's granddaughter, Octavia, to replace his deceased wife, and asked for the hand of Pompey's

daughter.<sup>193</sup> Octavia was already married and Pompey's daughter was engaged, but what did that matter? The marriage of the one could be annulled and the engagement of the other broken off. As for Caesar himself, in order to become Pompey's son-in-law he was quite willing to send away the sterile Calpurnia, whom he incidentally tolerated with a good enough grace—at a distance of some thousand miles. Pompey did not agree to this two-fold matrimonial project and asked for the hand of the daughter of Scipio Metellus, who a short time afterwards was called upon to share the honours of the consulship with his new son-in-law.

This was a warning for Caesar and he was quite able to grasp its meaning. From now on he would have to make it his business to counterbalance Pompey's ever increasing power and renown. The task promised to be difficult. Caesar did not find it so. He had at his disposal the most irresistible of all weapons—money. This would permit him to overcome time and space. His operations were carried out in masterly fashion. From the little town where he was presiding over the assizes a steady stream of gold began to flow towards Rome. At the same time he proceeded to distribute in lavish style places, subsidies, and bonuses, spending without restraint the booty acquired during five years of war. He won over most of Pompey's important connections by giving them loans, either gratuitously or at very low interest. Choosing from specially prepared lists those people likely to be useful to him, he invited them for a visit and showered them with gifts. Others came to him of their own accord. They were equally well received. He did better still. In his infinite generosity he even went so far as to remember his guests' slaves. All returned to Rome praising their benefactor to the skies.

While Caesar was consolidating the results of his conquest by corruption and bribery, treason was beginning to undermine it inside the very country where his exploits had been performed. One by one, the Gallic chiefs whom he had honoured with his confidence broke faith and rose against him. After Dumnorix, Indutiomarus and Ambiorix—here was Commius, his faithful servant and king of the Atrebatas, who was plotting and preparing an anti-Roman coalition. Labienus, who was in command of the conquered territories during Caesar's absence, got wind of the conspiracy and determined to end it by a simple and quick procedure. The military tribune Volusenus—a member of Caesar's staff, who seems to have specialized in delicate missions—was directed to remove Commius from the land

of the living. He went to his camp, accompanied by a few assistants who were to carry out the physical side of the operation. When he came into the presence of the king of the Atrebatas, Volusenus held out his hand to him. This essentially frank and friendly gesture was to be the signal for the murder : at that moment the centurion standing nearest to Commius was to strike him down with his sword. Whether because the officer lacked assurance for this new rôle of assassin, or because Commius' friends were able to intervene in time, the attempt was a failure. A skirmish followed and the Romans made off. Matters remained thus, but from then on Commius redoubled his activity and devoted himself entirely to organizing the insurrection. In the course of the meetings which took place between him and the Gallic chiefs, a plan of action was worked out. They were going to profit by Caesar's absence in Cisalpine Gaul to cut him off from his army. It would be easy enough, they thought, since his legions would not dare leave their winter quarters during the absence of their leader, while he would not be able to rejoin them without escort.

Which were the tribes that took part in these councils, and are we permitted to speak at this point of a general Gallic uprising aimed at driving out the invader ? I do not think so. A great many nations, for reasons of caution or self-interest, kept away. Those who from the start resolutely committed themselves to revolt were few. They certainly included the Carnutes, always among the first in any struggle for national independence. There can be no doubt that the tribes governed by Commius—the Atrebatas and the Morini—also participated from the outset. As for the others, only the individual co-operation of certain more or less influential personalities was recorded at that moment, and it must be noted that in most of these cases they were opposed by the men in power, who intended to observe their obligations towards the conqueror.

Among these isolated adherents of the first hour figured a young nobleman of the Averni for whom, after numerous fruitless discussions, history has retained the name by which Caesar called him : Vercingetorix.<sup>194</sup>

Little is known of his life before the great adventure. There were two brothers who were rivals for power in the rich nation of the Arverni : Celtillus, eager, ambitious, and haunted by dreams of greatness ; and Gobannitio, pliant, cautious, calculating. It happened as might have been expected. The Arverni, at first tempted by the

prospects of domination offered them by Celtillus, ended by wearying of his excessive ambitions and by putting him to death on the grounds that he was aiming at tyranny. Gobannitio took his place, and in full agreement with his country's Senate, took the government. Vercingetorix, who seems to have inherited his father's ardent and violent temperament, suspected by the party in power as son of the vanquished leader, must have found his precarious existence hard to bear. He entered Caesar's service, and like many another of his compatriots, was placed in the cavalry contingent requisitioned from the Gauls. In the course of the campaigns which followed he distinguished himself, probably by some brilliant action, since the *Commentaries* introduce him to us as personally singled out by Caesar and honoured with the title of *friend*. This also suggests that during the four or five years of his service in the ranks of the Roman army he maintained, at least in appearance, an attitude of perfect loyalty towards his master. He did not take part in the expedition to Britain, but remained on the Continent, while Caesar was wearing himself out in vain efforts against the troops of Cassivellaunus. It is possible that the courageous and stubborn resistance of the British chief gave Vercingetorix his first ideas for a plan of national liberation. He is not mentioned in connection with the attempt of Ambiorix, nor in the abortive revolt of Indutiomarus. As he was aware of the brutal rapidity with which Caesar was known to put down isolated uprisings, perhaps he did not want to risk the uncertainty of an insurrection on a small scale. At the beginning of 52, however, the situation took on a new aspect. Caesar was having political difficulties in Rome; his legions had suffered reverses at Aduatuca; the revival of anti-Roman activity was becoming apparent in the ever increasing number of local rebellions; the people were growing exasperated over the depletion of their food supplies. The combination of these circumstances must have appeared to him to create a propitious setting for the development of his plan. Without doubt he had been present at the assembly of the Gallic chiefs, not of course as a representative of his nation, but as a private individual. He returned home and patiently awaited the day which would bring the signal for action. This day came. One evening at Gergovia, Vercingetorix learnt the great news. At Cenabum (Orleans) the Carnutes, directed by Cotuatus, the high priest of the Druids, and his assistant Conconnetodumnus, had massacred the head of Caesar's administration, C. Fufius Cita, and a number of Roman merchants who had recently settled in the city. This was the long

awaited signal announcing that the hour had come. Vercingetorix instantly set to work. He called together his sympathizers and exhorted them to march with him to regain their lost liberty. His speech produced the required effect: the people took up arms. His uncle Gobannitio and the Senate, however, showed less enthusiasm. They were afraid to compromise themselves. They opposed Vercingetorix's action, and as he persisted in his purpose they drove him from the town. Taking refuge in the country, Vercingetorix formed a battalion of 'destitutes' and 'vagabonds'. That is how Caesar describes the cadres of his first army. This fact deserves to be remembered. Hitherto it had always been the Gallic nobles who flaunted the banner of revolt at the call of some offended or ambitious chief. This time it was mostly the peasants who responded to the call to take up arms against Rome. They were numerous enough for Vercingetorix to be able to march on Gergovia and seize power. From that time it was in the name of the people of the Arverni that he sent out his proclamations. They found an immediate echo among the Senones. There, too, the government of the city, sufficiently 'educated' by the tragic fate of Acco, had been unwilling to take action. Drappes, a bold leader whose social status is unknown, played a part exactly similar to that of Vercingetorix at Gergovia. As soon as the news of the Cenabum massacre was known, he too called upon the common people—the peasants—to rise. He went one step further. He drew the slaves into his ranks, promising them liberty; he invited the outlaws to join him and, to quote the author of the eighth book of the *Commentaries*, 'he welcomed robbers'. (Here a contemporary of Caesar, referring to the members of the essentially democratic army formed by Drappes, anticipated many a modern historian called upon to describe a popular movement.) Yet another leader stepped forward: Lucterius, belonging to the neighbouring tribe of the Cadurci. He was 'a man of unusual fearlessness', as even Caesar had to admit. He seems to have been the first to establish contact with Vercingetorix and to recognize his authority. His task was to draw into the insurrection certain tribes which had remained aloof. He went to the Ruteni of Rouergue, to the Nitiobriges of Agenais, to the Gabali of Gévaudan. Everywhere he gained adherents and assembled troops; and finally, after putting a strong army on its feet, he appeared at the gates of the Roman province, threatening Narbonne.

During this time Vercingetorix was widening the range of his propaganda. The Parisii, the Pictones, the Aulerici, the Turones, the

Lemovices, the Andecavi, the Armorican tribes, all came to support him. He was given supreme command. Henceforth the revolt was to be open.<sup>195</sup>

When Caesar was informed of these events he immediately broke off his political negotiations and hurried to Transalpine Gaul. The appearance of Lucterius on the threshold of the Province, which until now had been outside the zone of military operations, indicated the course to be taken. He went straight to Narbonne, rapidly organized its defence, restored the fortifications, and placed garrisons on the frontier with instructions to occupy every place from Toulouse to Uzès where a road entered the country. Lucterius, a dauntless soldier but a timid general, let him go ahead, and when he realized that the Roman troops had formed a solid guard at the entrance to the Province, he gave up his offensive and withdrew northwards. The first round in the campaign which had just opened had been won by Caesar. As always, he owed his success to the swiftness of his decisions and the precision of his methods. The second round was about to begin. This time his object was to crush the rebellious Arverni. From the outset he was faced with a difficulty which appeared insurmountable. In order to reach their country it was necessary to cross the Cévennes mountains, which at this time of year (it was in mid-winter) were covered with snow so deep that all travelling was impossible. That was why Vercingetorix had believed he would be protected against any attack from the south. So safe did he feel that he judged it possible to leave his country in order to 'work upon' the Bituriges who were hesitating to break with Rome. He finally succeeded in drawing them into the revolt, but just as his negotiations were completed, messengers arrived with the news that the Roman army had penetrated into the interior of the Arverni country.

Once more Caesar had chosen to show that weather and nature must yield to his demands. He had been told that the snow which obstructed his way across the mountains was six feet deep. He simply replied that it must be removed, and his soldiers removed it. It was the first time that they attempted such a task in such severe cold. This did not prevent Caesar's orders from being carried out to the letter: at the end of twenty-four hours the formidable obstacle no longer existed.

Thereupon panic broke out among the Arverni. Vercingetorix, leaving the Bituriges to shift for themselves, hastened back to his country. Caesar's object had been attained: the problem was to

immobilize the enemy within the limits of the Arverni territory, confining the progress of the rebellion to this region.

Caesar stayed only two days, just long enough for his troops to obtain a foothold in this country. Then, after having put Decimus Brutus in command, he left in precipitate haste. Where was he going? He did not tell anyone. As they hurried along, his escort realized that they were travelling towards Vienne. As for the secrecy with which he had surrounded his departure, he explains it by saying that he wanted to avoid the snares and traps which he had every reason to fear. At Vienne he met a detachment of cavalry which had been awaiting him for several days. Without stopping, he took it with him and continued to ride towards the country of the Lingones, where he found two more legions garrisoned. Thence he sent orders to the two legions stationed in the country of the Remi to march to Agedincum (Sens), where they were to rejoin the main body of his troops—six legions. He then started off in the same direction himself, and there he was, at last, at the head of his whole army.

All these moves were carried out with lightning speed, calculated to take the enemy by surprise. Vercingetorix, however, who had become familiar with Caesar's methods, replied in like manner. As soon as he knew that his opponent had left his country, he went back to the Bituriges. He was believed to be in their country all the time, but actually he had only crossed it in order to arrive unexpectedly before Gorgobina (La Guerche),<sup>196</sup> a town of the Boji (a tribe which Caesar had placed under the authority of the Aedui).

This manoeuvre put Caesar in an awkward position. If he did not intervene and allowed the subjugation of a small tribe protected by his favourite nation, the other Gallic peoples, who were living under the same conditions (and there were a great many of them), would see that they could not count on him if they were attacked, and would immediately break away. On the other hand, to launch an attack in mid-winter with very limited provisions would mean risking a famine, given the ever increasing difficulties of transport. 'Caesar thought it was better to endure everything rather than alienate all his friends by accepting such an insult', state the *Commentaries*. As for the food problem, he solved it by 'inviting' the Aedui to provide adequate supplies. Messengers were sent to the Boji exhorting them to hold out until his arrival, which was imminent.

Caesar started off at the head of eight legions.<sup>197</sup> His march led him through the country of the Senones, where Drappes, having



formed bands of partisans, intercepted and pillaged all convoys intended for the Romans. On the second day he reached Vellaunodunum (Montargis). There was a two-day siege. The city capitulated on the third. From there he went to the country of the Carnutes. On reaching Cenabum late in the evening of the second day, he prepared for its inhabitants terrible reprisals for the recent massacres. Taking advantage of the darkness the inhabitants tried to escape, using the bridge which had been built across the Loire. However, it was narrow and so were the roads leading to it. As a result they were all held up in a bottleneck which enabled a handful of Caesar's soldiers at dawn to capture every one of them. The town, deserted by its inhabitants, was pillaged and set on fire. Caesar made a present of the booty and prisoners to his soldiers and went on his way. He crossed the Loire and penetrated into the land of the Bituriges until he reached Noviodunum. As soon as he arrived the inhabitants sent him a delegation. If he would only spare them they were ready to accept any conditions he cared to impose. Caesar let them know what he required: hostages, arms, horses. They were preparing to hand them over when a report spread that the horsemen of Vercingetorix were approaching. It was true. The Gallic chief, informed of Caesar's advance, had raised the siege of Gorgobina in order to meet him. Thus from afar, by subduing the Senones and the Carnutes, Caesar had been able, without even setting foot in their country, to free the Boji from the danger which threatened them.

The arrival of Vercingetorix revived the courage of the Bituriges. They broke off negotiations and prepared for a siege. But Caesar had other things on his mind. He turned to face Vercingetorix and put his horsemen into action. 'As the latter were in difficulty,' we read in the *Commentaries*, 'he sent to their assistance about four hundred Germans whom he was accustomed to have with him since the beginning [of the campaign].'

This is the first time that Caesar mentions an auxiliary force of Germans in his work. The principle of utilizing mercenary troops of foreign origin was not new to him, and we have already seen that he used Cretans, Numidians, Baleares and probably others; but never before have we heard of Germans being called upon to fight in the ranks of his army, side by side with his legionaries.<sup>198</sup> Caesar does not tell us where they came from, but it seems likely that they were the same horsemen whom he had sent to Vienne and whom he joined when he passed through that town. At what period and from which

of the Rhineland peoples had he recruited them? We do not know. They may have come from the Ubii, who had always been inclined to seek Caesar's favour and with whom the matter may have been negotiated at the time of his second Germanic expedition. It is quite possible that these Ubii, while furnishing a certain part of the contingent agreed upon, had tried to make up the required numbers by applying to neighbouring tribes. This is all the more likely, since evidently the present levy was not to be the only one and others were to follow.

The appearance of the Germanic cavalry radically changed the nature of the battle. Vercingetorix's troops beat a retreat, and the inhabitants of Noviodunum, remembering their original frame of mind, capitulated all over again.

Caesar did not waste time in this town, which he considered of little importance. He was in a hurry to reach Avaricum (Bourges),<sup>199</sup> the largest and strongest city in all the country of the Bituriges; moreover, it was situated in a very fertile region, which was of special interest to him. The possession of this town should, he thought, result in the submission of the whole nation.

This time Caesar met with a better organized resistance. In the council of war called together by Vercingetorix it had at first been proposed to burn the city and destroy everything which could not be evacuated. The idea was to deprive the Romans of the provisions which they were hoping to find there and of which they were beginning to be in urgent need. The Bituriges begged Vercingetorix to spare their capital. The Gallic chief finally yielded to their entreaties, but, too prudent to shut himself up inside the city, he entrusted its defence to its inhabitants and established his camp about fifteen miles away. From there he planned to direct operations by means of a liaison service.

The town was strongly protected by its geographical position. It was surrounded on all sides by streams and marshes. There was only one place where it could be entered, and there the passage was extremely narrow. That was precisely where Caesar pitched his camp, and from there his soldiers were to go to storm the city. Hardly had they arrived when they took up their tools and once again became woodcutters, carpenters and diggers. Work was progressing at a greater pace than ever and they were outdoing each other in energy and good humour. They had not forgotten Caesar's generosity after the fall of Cenabum. They were expecting further proofs of it and

their covetousness was growing. The town was rich and overflowing with treasures of every description. They were already calculating the weight and value of their takings. That helped them to bear with a smile the temporary privations, which were great. The siege dragged on ; provisions were beginning to be scarce. Those faithful allies, the Aedui, made but a poor response to the requests for supplies ; in the end there was no response at all. The Boji, upon whom Caesar had imposed the same obligations in return for his help and protection, sent nothing either. To the endless reminders Caesar sent them they replied that they were poor and that their territory was very small. . . . There was nothing to be had in the neighbourhood. Before shutting themselves up in Avaricum, the Bituriges had set fire to all the barns. Within a vast circumference, the country was totally ravaged and there was nothing whatever to be found. With great trouble the Romans were able to requisition a few cattle from distant villages. The hungrier they were, however, the more energy and enthusiasm they put into their work. Caesar knew this, and knowing it he was able to risk a proposal which he certainly would not have made if he had had reason to think it would be accepted. In the course of one of his tours of inspection he offered his soldiers to abandon the siege, if they thought the privations they had to endure were too severe. His offer met with unanimous protestations. They considered it would be a dishonour to give up what they had begun ; they were ready to suffer anything rather than fail to avenge the Roman citizens who had been the victims of the perfidious Gauls at Cenabum. This is how Caesar interpreted the reactions of his legionaries. Perhaps he should have added their thirst for the booty of which they did not want to be defrauded after having become accustomed to consider it in advance as their own. The siege continued.

This time, Caesar had to deal with an adversary worthy of respect. He could not help paying tribute to the skill and stubbornness of the defenders of Avaricum. 'They are a race of great ingenuity', he wrote, 'and they have an unusual aptitude for imitating what they see done.' Taking the towers of the besiegers as a model, they erected the same towers along the whole length of their walls. By means of saps they made all the earthworks of the Romans fall in. In the course of their sorties they set fire to one of the terraces which Caesar's pioneers had erected with tremendous effort. They prevented the Romans from bringing their galleries up to the city walls by hurling sharply pointed wooden spikes and boiling pitch upon the unprotected

parts. All this obstructed the siege and prolonged it beyond measure. The work was further delayed by the intense cold and the continuous rain. Day and night Caesar spent long hours in the workshops, urging his soldiers on and exhorting them not to lose a moment. At last, on the twenty-fifth day of the siege, the construction of an enormous terrace was finished. It was 330 feet wide and 80 feet high. From that moment the fate of the town seemed to be sealed; its capture was inevitable. Vercingetorix realised this and ordered the defenders to leave the city under cover of night and to meet at his camp. The women prevented their departure by their cries and lamentations. Only a small group of eight hundred men succeeded in getting away. The next day there was torrential rainfall. The guards on the ramparts wanted to take shelter. Caesar, on the contrary, considered that this weather was suitable for an attack. He ordered all work to be stopped, secretly summoned his legionaries and invited them 'at last, after so many efforts, to gather the fruits of victory'. Special rewards were promised to those who first scaled the ramparts and gave the signal for the assault. The men bounded forward and with an irresistible dash swept over the walls and towers of the enemy. The defenders tried to regroup in the public squares inside the city. During a violent street battle the civilian population was pitilessly slain at the same time as the combatants. Neither women nor children nor old men were spared. Out of about forty thousand, not one survived.<sup>200</sup> Caesar has noted it down with cold indifference. Then the pillage began. It lasted several days. The hopes of the Romans were not disappointed; they found great abundance of corn and provisions of all sorts. Caesar's soldiers could thus recover from their fatigue and satisfy their hunger.

It was April. Winter was over. The season was suitable for battle. Caesar conceived the idea of attacking the camp of Vercingetorix, who had wisely spared his army from the trials suffered within Avaricum and therefore had a fighting force which was completely intact. However, just as Caesar was ready to start, a complication arose.

With him, military and political action always went hand in hand. At the beginning of his campaign it had been to his advantage to provoke internal dissension among the states he was attacking and to encourage their quarrels so as to weaken their resistance from within. Now that he had subdued them, it suited his purpose that there should be order and harmony. And here were these Aedui, who formed

the cornerstone of the political edifice he had erected in Gaul, failing to play their part and on the point of precipitating a most serious civil war. Even before hearing of it, Caesar had felt its effects, that is to say the delay, followed by the complete failure, of the promised supplies. Now he was to learn the cause.

Personal rivalries had put two men into violent opposition, and behind them the whole country had taken sides. Catus, the brother of the retiring *vergobret* Valetiacus, was anxious to succeed him. The Aedui had a law which forbade the consecutive appointment of two brothers to the same office. Valetiacus, however, had not scrupled to circumvent it in order to please his younger brother. He took matters into his own hands and, without waiting for the day of the election, he called the magistrates to a private conference—in a different place from the one where they usually met in council—and persuaded them to vote for his brother. The day of the election arrived. The ousted candidate, Convictolitavus, came forward, supported by the party of the priests. The magistrates refused to proceed with the voting, declaring that the election had already taken place. The candidate would not give in. If the magistrates were not going to vote he would find other electors, and so he appealed to his patrons the priests. They assembled at once and named him *vergobret*. So now there were two of them : the one appointed in an irregular manner by regular electors, the other regularly appointed by irregular votes. Each claimed to be the only legal one. The Senate was divided, and so were the people. This time, there was no mediator like Divitiacus who had known so well how to calm the local storms. At this point the Aeduan nobles took the initiative and approached Caesar. ‘If the conflict is prolonged,’ declared the delegates sent to the Roman camp, ‘we shall see the two halves of the nation at each other’s throats.’ It depended on Caesar to prevent this misfortune by a careful inquiry and by the weight of his influence.

Caesar was well aware of the inconveniences which would be caused by an interruption of his military operations at a moment when the situation looked particularly favourable for him, but he was equally aware of the disastrous results which the outbreak of civil war among the Aedui might have : Vercingetorix would instantly turn such troubles to his advantage in one way or another. He decided that he must above all else avert this danger, and as the laws of the Aedui forbade the supreme magistrates to cross the frontier, Caesar, on this occasion respecting their traditions, travelled in person to their country.

Established at Decize, half-way between Avaricum and Bibracte, he convoked the Senate and summoned the two contestants. After an inquiry and an interrogation of the interested parties, which led him to conclude that Vercingetorix's money had played some part in the affair, he pronounced himself in favour of Convictolitavus and obliged Cotus, the 'usurper', to withdraw his claim. When the dispute had been settled, he made an important speech. The Aedui must above all forget their domestic quarrels. They must only think of the war and devote all their energies to it. That was the only thing that mattered. If they would give him their full co-operation, they should have their reward . . . later on, after the victory, when all Gaul was subdued and the germs of discontent had been exterminated once and for all. The reward would be in proportion to the help they had given. It was to be thoroughly understood that he expected them scrupulously to carry out their former promises concerning the delivery of provisions. This time he would also need more manpower. It was not only cavalry he wanted—all their cavalry, not just a contingent—but also a body of ten thousand foot soldiers to protect his convoys of food. The Aedui promised everything and took leave of Caesar.

He rejoined his troops. He had lost precious time over the Aeduan affair. On his return he changed his tactics. Instead of attacking Vercingetorix's camp he chose as his objective Gergovia, the capital of the Arverni, hoping to force Vercingetorix to leave his forests and marshes and to fight. He considered that six legions, or a little more than twenty thousand men, would be enough to beat the Gallic chief and gain possession of his principal town. The four other legions were placed under the command of Labienus and sent to keep the Senones and the Parisii quiet.

What Caesar had foreseen turned out to be correct. Vercingetorix was obliged to take action. He could not sacrifice his own capital as he had sacrificed that of the Bituriges. His first concern was to prevent Caesar from crossing the Allier by destroying the bridges. Therefore the Romans were obliged to follow the right bank of the river. Vercingetorix did the same on the left bank.

The two armies watched one another closely as they advanced each on its own side of the Allier. It was Caesar who was the more embarrassed. He had sooner or later to find a way of crossing. It was May and the river was not fordable before September. What was he to do? What expedient could he invent? As usual, he ended

by finding one. Having come to one of the bridges destroyed by Vercingetorix, he detached two legions from the main body of his army and hid with them in the neighbouring woods. The remainder of his troops, ranged in such a way as to fill the gaps caused by the missing twenty cohorts, continued their march. Vercingetorix, quite unsuspecting, likewise marched on. Caesar waited till both armies had passed into the distance. Then he summoned his legionaries to come out of the woods and ordered them to reconstruct the broken bridge without delay. The work was quickly finished. Putting away their tools, the amateur engineers once more took up their shields, helmets, and swords, formed their ranks and crossed on to the opposite bank in military formation.<sup>201</sup> A message recalled the other legions, who followed them across the bridge and the next day, on approaching Gergovia, Vercingetorix had an extremely disagreeable surprise: he saw the vanguard of Caesar's army appearing in the distance.

In taking the side of Convictolitavus, Caesar had been very ill-advised. He only found out much later that by doing so he had installed an agent in the pay of Vercingetorix as the highest magistrate in the country under his protection. The results of this investiture were not long in coming. Having in his possession considerable sums of money put at his disposal by the Gallic chief, Convictolitavus proceeded to buy consciences wholesale. He began by working upon the youth of the nation, who were generous, enthusiastic, and easier to inflame than the others. Moreover, they seemed to have recovered a certain minimum of national pride, lacking in their elders. At any rate, we find them preparing for action, organizing groups, choosing leaders. These leaders were Litavicus and his brothers, of whom we know nothing except that they came from a family of great renown. It was they whom Convictolitavus approached first. To quote Caesar, 'he shared the price of treason with them', but, besides these arguments in hard cash, he had been able to awaken their patriotism, exhorting them to remember that they were 'free men, born to command'. He recognized that he had contracted 'certain obligations' towards Caesar, although in his opinion the latter 'had merely consecrated the justice of his cause'. The 'desire for national independence' came first with him. 'There is only one obstacle to the victory of the Gauls,' he told them, 'and that is the attitude of the Aedui. The authority of their example holds back the other states; let them abandon the Romans, and the latter will no longer be able to hold

on in Gaul.' These words filled the hearts of the young with enthusiasm. The struggle was decided upon, they only had to pass on to action. Here lay the chief difficulty. If the Aedui had had enough of obeying the Romans, they did not seem disposed to regain their liberty by force of arms. To stir them up to fight for the cause was a difficult task. The conspirators, inspired by Convictolitavus, who was lavishly pouring gold into their pockets, resolved to make the attempt in spite of everything. It was agreed that Litavicus should be in command of the infantry corps promised to Caesar as an escort for the provisions which the Aedui were to provide for the Romans. It would be his task to arrange a change of route somewhere along the way, so that instead of reaching the camp of Caesar, the men and foodstuffs would arrive in the camp of Vercingetorix. The mission of his brothers was no less delicate. The Roman army already contained a certain number of Aeduan horsemen who had entered Caesar's service as a result of the treaties made at the time of Divitiacus. It was a matter of persuading them to betray their chief and of regaining their allegiance to the national cause. This was done.

Among the young Aedui received by Caesar two had become his intimates: Eporedorix, who came from one of the most influential families of his country, and Viridomarus, less highly born but recommended by Divitiacus to Caesar, who raised him, as he tells us himself, 'to the highest honours'. The affair of the two *vergobreti* nearly caused a quarrel between them. Eporedorix was on the side of Convictolitavus, while Viridomarus supported Cotus. Caesar brought them together again by appointing them both as supervisors over the contingent of Aeduan cavalry which had entered his service.

As soon as the brothers of Litavicus arrived at the Roman camp they entered into relations with Eporedorix, who, as a partisan of Convictolitavus, inspired them with more confidence. In the course of a nocturnal interview they told him of their plan and all they proposed to do. Eporedorix declared himself to be in perfect agreement with them and promised his wholehearted co-operation. The conversation was hardly over, however, when he went to wake Caesar and denounced to him the 'wicked designs' which the emissaries of Convictolitavus were preparing to carry out in his own camp. According to the *Commentaries*, these disclosures 'strongly affected' Caesar. He ordered the immediate arrest of the brothers of Litavicus. They were warned in time, however (perhaps by the same Eporedorix, who, as shall be seen later on, seems to have played



a double part in the affair, working for both sides simultaneously), and managed to make their escape.<sup>202</sup>

All this was very tiresome. The defection of the Aedui deprived Caesar of his principal support in Gaul. He decided it was necessary to act at once. Although he had already made all arrangements for opening the siege of Gergovia, he did not hesitate to stop his preparations and, leaving two legions on the spot to guard the camp, he led all the rest of the army towards the country of the Aedui after exhorting them 'not to be discouraged by a painful march which necessity demanded'.

Meantime, Litavicus and his men had started off at the head of a convoy of provisions intended for Caesar's troops. A group of Roman officials, probably belonging to the commissariat, accompanied him. On the way he was busy organizing a dramatic scene calculated to produce the required effect on the troops under his command and to facilitate the change of direction he had in mind. When they had come within about thirty miles of Gergovia he gathered his soldiers round him and 'all in tears' spoke to them as follows: 'Whither are we going? All our cavalry, all our nobles have perished; citizens of the highest rank, Eporedorix and Viridomarus, accused of treason by the Romans, have been put to death without a chance to defend themselves. Learn the details of the tragedy from the mouths of those who escaped from the massacre, because I, who have lost my brothers and all my near ones, am prevented by my grief from describing it.' Having said this, he brought forward some assistants, who had been duly rehearsed, to confirm before the whole assembly what Litavicus had just announced. Then a clamour arose. What was to be done? What decisions must be taken? Litavicus, making the most of the mounting indignation which swept the crowd, cleverly threw out his suggestion. This was not the time for deliberations. They must break with the Romans immediately and join their brothers the Arverni. First, however, the death of the victims so infamously murdered must be avenged: 'these bandits'—meaning the Roman citizens who formed part of the convoy—must be wiped out. Thereupon they tortured them to death. The provisions intended for Caesar were given over to pillage. Messengers were dispatched to the interior of the country announcing the massacre of the Aedui by the Romans and exhorting the population of the towns to avenge this outrage and to follow the example of Litavicus. Then they set out for Gergovia. Half-way, they encountered Caesar's legions. He

sent out his Germans, who checked the advance of the Aedui, but he did not engage in battle. Caesar had thought of something better. Having heard the story of the pseudo-massacre invented by Litavicus, he ordered Eporedorix and Viridomarus to show themselves in the first rank of the horsemen and to speak to their compatriots, thus offering in their own persons an irrefutable denial of the allegations of Litavicus. This was completely successful. The Aedui changed their minds, threw down their arms and begged for mercy. Litavicus fled with a few faithful followers. Caesar gave his troops three hours' rest (it was just midnight) and returned to the siege of Gergovia.

In reading Caesar's account of his attempt to take the capital of the Arverni, we must not forget that these are the words of a general who has met with defeat. It is therefore natural that, without trying radically to change the character of his reverses by transforming them into so many victories, he does his best to minimize their importance. Some writers, notably Camille Jullian, have considered the siege as a decisive success for the Gallic armies. J. Carcopino, on the other hand, tends to regard it as a perfect strategic success for Caesar, bringing him considerable advantages. It seems to me that both these theories, each one supported by very ingenious arguments, reflect the personal preferences of their authors. In the account which follows I shall endeavour to avoid any such bias.<sup>203</sup>

Caesar was disagreeably surprised by his first impressions of the locality. He made a tour of reconnaissance on the day of his arrival. He saw a plateau some 2250 feet in altitude stretching out in front of him. He contemplated the summits of the surrounding ranges, all of which were occupied by the troops of Vercingetorix. He admitted that it was 'a terrifying spectacle'. If, in going to Gergovia, he had cherished the hope of taking it by storm, now, at the sight of the redoubtable fortress he 'despaired of capturing it by force'. There remained only one thing to do—to lay a siege. That of Avaricum, less fortified and much less well defended, had taken him a month. How long was it to be this time? He would have to prepare for long drawn out operations and this would necessitate considerable stocks of equipment and food which, for the moment, were lacking. We can well understand how disturbed he was by the defection of the Aedui, and how anxious he was to nip it in the bud.

On returning from his expedition against Litavicus he devoted himself exclusively to organizing the siege. A regular blockade of the whole region was necessary owing to the length of the front. He began by cutting the enemy's communications. A night attack under his leadership enabled him to capture a hill situated opposite the town and well defended by natural conditions. There he established what the *Commentaries* call his 'little camp', from which he communicated by means of a double trench with the big one. One day, when he was inspecting the work in progress, Caesar noticed that part of the fortifications of the town were completely devoid of troops. Surprised, he called for some of the deserters who had recently come over to his camp. Their statements seemed to agree: fearing an attack of the Romans at a point which he considered vulnerable, Vercingetorix had ordered most of his soldiers to fortify it, thereby weakening the defences in several other places. Caesar wished to profit by this. He did not consider it as an occasion for a regular battle, but for one of those surprise attacks, one of those sudden bold strokes in which he excelled and which, if successful, won him victory at a small cost.<sup>204</sup>

First of all, he had to deceive the enemy and put him on the wrong scent by creating a diversion. In the middle of the night numerous squadrons of cavalry were sent out in all directions, making a great deal of noise so as to attract the attention of Vercingetorix's troops. Meantime Caesar gathered the mule-drivers of his convoys, gave them helmets and sent them at dawn on a long tour over the surrounding hills, imitating the bearing and movement of his horsemen. Then, by a long detour, they were finally to reassemble at the point from which they had set out. To mislead his enemy still further, he ordered a whole legion to march quite openly towards the heights where the Gauls were putting up fortifications. Vercingetorix was taken in by the feint and led all his available troops to this spot to face what he believed to be an imminent attack. Caesar seized this opportunity and ordered his soldiers to pass from the main camp to the little camp by way of the communication trenches. In order not to attract the attention of the defenders of the town, he carried his precautions to such a point that he obliged his legionaries to camouflage the ornaments on their helmets and the badges of their units.

The stratagem succeeded. Rushing out unexpectedly, the Romans crossed the first entrenchments without difficulty and appeared before the walls and gates of the city. There followed heart-rending scenes.

As virtually the entire male population had been called away, either to arms or to build fortifications, there were only women left in the city. Seeing that Caesar's soldiers were preparing to scale the walls and break through the gates, they rushed in a mass on to the ramparts. They were haunted by the frightful vision of the massacre of Avaricum. By their despairing lamentations and their screams of terror, they tried to move their assailants to pity. Respectable matrons, panic-stricken, threw them money and costly materials. Others, younger and perhaps less wealthy, rent their clothes and, driven by an impulse of savage immodesty, displayed their naked breasts. Several slid down from the top of the ramparts, to throw themselves as offerings of flesh and blood, trembling with terror, into the arms of the legionaries, who seem to have taken but little notice of their charms. These men were possessed and consumed solely by their thirst for booty. It drove them on, making them deaf to the call of their officers, who anxiously watched them disperse through the town and lose all touch with each other. It was in vain that Caesar sounded the retreat : they did not hear it, or did not wish to hear it. In the meantime the troops of Vercingetorix, assembled at the other side of the town, had heard what was going on, and came running to the most seriously threatened points. Soon there were enough of them to drive the Romans back. Split up into small groups and exhausted by the long battle, Caesar's soldiers tried to make themselves a passage through the ranks of the Gauls who were now attacking them from all sides, spurred on by the crowd of women, whose screams (this time of joy) could be heard above the tumult of the fighting.

Instead of bringing his forces to bear on the sector which had been left undefended by Vercingetorix, where almost certainly he would have been able to gain strong enemy positions, Caesar was obliged to send his best legion, the Tenth, and part of the Thirteenth to cover the retreat of the units which were withdrawing from Gergovia, fighting their way step by step.

This experience cost him seven hundred men killed, of whom forty-six were centurions. It was the highest number of casualties ever admitted by Caesar in the course of the battles fought in Gaul. From this point of view it was therefore an incontestable defeat, although actually the reduction by barely three and a half per cent of the numbers engaged could scarcely have made an appreciable difference to the fighting power of his army.

In his *Commentaries*, Caesar has done his best to minimize the

importance of this defeat. He insists particularly upon the insubordination of the soldiers, which he regards as the principal, if not the only reason for the large number of casualties. If we were to follow his reasoning to the end, we should reach this conclusion : Caesar's object was to capture the camp of the Gauls and to arrive at the outskirts of Gergovia without going beyond the gates of the town. In going further, the legionaries, by their own action, had lost the fruits of their victory. It was with this that he was to reproach them the next day, in almost cordial terms in the course of a speech which passed for an official reprimand and ended with these cheering words : ' They had no need to be discouraged and they must not attribute to the military qualities of their enemy a defeat which was due to their own unfavourable position.'

The object of this speech was clear. It was not intended to condemn the conduct of the soldiers so much as to raise their morale, which seemed to be greatly affected by the defeat they had suffered. Caesar was not satisfied with these verbal exhortations. He wanted to prove to the enemy that the determination of his troops remained as firm as ever and that there were no signs of disorder among his legionaries. That was why, as soon as he had finished his harangue, he ordered them to take up their arms and range themselves in battle formation in front of the camp. The Gauls made no response—Caesar mentions nothing on this occasion beyond a slight skirmish of horsemen which ended in his favour. They were thoroughly satisfied to have driven the Romans out of their town. The next day Caesar again drew up his troops for battle. Vercingetorix made no move.

The soldiers went back to their tents. They were beginning to regain confidence in their strength and were perhaps already thinking of the coming revenge. Then, towards the end of the day, Caesar's orders were communicated to them : raise the camp, collect the baggage and get ready to march ! What had happened ?

Let us now retrace our steps to the time when the Aedui were receiving the messages of Litavicus calling upon them to avenge the 'atrocities' committed by the Romans against their compatriots. The desired effect was achieved. The whole nation rose. Passions were let loose. At Bibracte, the property of Roman citizens was seized and they themselves were slain or carried off as slaves. At Cavillonum (Chalon) the inhabitants laid hands on the military tribune, M. Aristius, who was passing through the city, and threw him into

prison. They robbed the Italian merchants. Then news got round that the Aeduan troops had surrendered to Caesar. Immediately there was a complete change round. The authorities hastened to liberate Aristius, offered him their excuses, and swore that they had had nothing to do with the treatment he had suffered. They ordered an inquiry into the pillage, and promised to punish those responsible with severity; the goods of Litavicus and his brothers were confiscated and a deputation started out with all speed to implore Caesar's pardon. At the same time, however, other deputations were sent to the camp of Vercingetorix, where Litavicus had taken refuge, and to the cities in revolt, to prepare the ground for an agreement directed against the common enemy.

Caesar was aware of this, but when he received the Aeduan deputies he was careful not to reveal his knowledge of the double game they were playing and, swallowing his pride, he did not show his resentment. 'He spoke to them with all possible gentleness,' it is stated in the *Commentaries*, 'declaring that the blindness and irresponsibility of the populace would not make him judge the Aeduan nation any more severely and in no way diminished his good will towards them.' With that the interview came to an end and the envoys of the Aeduan government left the Roman camp thoroughly reassured.

The Aeduan betrayal had created a new situation. Not only did it deprive Caesar of the supplies needed to carry on the blockade of Gergovia, but it also gave rise to a new danger, cutting him off from the army of Labienus in the country of the Parisii—without counting the considerable contribution of men, equipment, and provisions which this change would bring the rebels. The problem stood out in all its seriousness. Was it advisable to continue the siege and to concentrate obstinately upon a local objective, while the waves of revolt were threatening to submerge the whole country? Held down with his six legions in this mountainous region, Caesar was running the risk of being encircled himself and of changing from besieger into besieged, while Labienus, left to himself with only second-rate troops at his disposal, would have to bear unaided the whole brunt of the struggle against an enemy of great numerical superiority.

Caesar was capable of facing reality and listening to the hard counsel of reason in times of stress. He understood that his first concern was to keep his army intact, and that the only way of doing this was to effect a junction between the two separate parts which had momentarily lost contact. Once his ten legions were reunited and he was free from

anxiety and master of his movements, he would be able to resume the interrupted task and impose a final peace upon a Gaul subjugated and crushed.

That was why Caesar left the Arvernian heights and marched off to the country of the Aedui. Vercingetorix<sup>1</sup> allowed him to go, though he had twenty-four thousand foot soldiers and a strong force of cavalry while Caesar's army numbered scarcely more than twenty thousand men in all. In doing so, he signed his death warrant and that of his whole nation.

After a two-day march, Caesar's army reached the Allier. Once more he had to construct bridges, this time in order to retreat. During these operations Viridomarus and Eporedorix, who had been following Caesar, warned him that Litavicus had left the camp of Vercingetorix, where he had taken refuge, and was returning to his countrymen to incite them to rise against the Romans. It was necessary, they considered, to get there before him and to counterbalance his activities by encouraging the Aedui to remain faithful.

Caesar appeared to be convinced by their arguments and entrusted them with this mission. He knew, however, that there was no longer anything to hope for from the Aedui. Nevertheless he did not want to hasten the break before he had rescued the immense quantities of provisions and the large reserves of cash deposited by his administrative services in the country.

At the moment of their departure Caesar gave his emissaries a final lesson on how they were to convince their erring compatriots of his great claims on their gratitude, by recalling from what abasement he had raised them and to what heights he had enabled them to attain. Then he sent them on their way.

The two representatives of the Roman proconsul went straight to Noviodunum (Nevers), the town which formed more or less the centre of Caesar's military administration at that time. It was there that, before starting on his expedition against Vercingetorix, he had left the greater part of the baggage of his army; it was there that all the hostages from Gaul were assembled; it was there that the taxes and tribute money were sent and, indeed, all the sums paid by the natives to the Roman treasury; it was there that his stores of corn were centralized, and it was there that a large number of horses, recently bought in Italy and Spain, had been delivered, in anticipation of an increase in his cavalry forces.

On reaching Noviodunum, Viridomarus and Eporedorix learnt

that Litavicus had already gone to Bibracte. The *vergobret* and a majority of the Senate had joined him, and an official deputation had been sent to Vercingetorix to conclude an alliance with him. Thus the Aedui were finally deserting their protector and master and going over to the camp of his enemies. At that, the two envoys did not hesitate : they denied their leader and declared themselves to be convinced partisans in the cause of national liberation. As they were anxious to give effective proof of their newly acquired patriotism, they set to work with exemplary zeal. To start with, they had the small Roman garrison and the merchants established in the city massacred by the populace. The money found on them was divided between the murderers. They laid hands on Caesar's horses as well as on the stocks of provisions collected by his administration. They loaded them into boats, and as there were not enough to hold everything the surplus was thrown into the river or burnt. The hostages were taken to Bibracte. As for the town itself, deciding that they had not enough troops to defend it, they set fire to it so that it would not be of any use to the Romans. Finally, they ordered a mass uprising in the region and established defence points on the banks of the Loire, which incidentally had become unfordable on account of the recent rising of its waters.

Yet another nation had joined those whom Caesar had to fight. When he heard of it, he showed no disappointment. He merely reflected that it was better to open the battle before the enemy was able to assemble large forces, and he therefore prepared to attack. Once again he surprised his opponents by his bold and quick decisions. He literally raced towards the Loire. His cavalry rode into the river in regular file, and, with their mounts, formed a sort of dike which held back the current. This enabled the legionaries to cross the Loire 'with just their arms and shoulders above the water, so that they could hold their weapons'. The detachments of Aedui placed on guard along the bank, surprised by this unexpected manoeuvre, completely lost their heads and retreated hastily, without even a semblance of resistance.

Caesar found corn and cattle in the country. Hence he was able to replace some of the losses caused by the destruction of Noviodunum, and without stopping he continued his march to meet Labienus. The latter was besieging Lutetia when disquieting rumours reached his camp, spreading with increasing persistency : the whole of Gaul was in revolt ; Caesar had nothing left to feed his troops ; defeated



by Vercingetorix, he was abandoning everything and, unable to cross the Loire, he was trying to reach the Province with the remains of his army, and so on. These rumours demoralized his soldiers and undermined their courage. Labienus himself was worried and perplexed. The news of the Aeduan defection, which was announced simultaneously, was perfectly authentic, and its repercussions were already making themselves felt in his sector. The formidable Bellovaci, who until now had remained neutral, began to raise troops and openly prepared for war. The army of Labienus was going to find itself in a very difficult position, obliged to fight against two enemies at the same time. Foreseeing this, Labienus decided to give up his project of taking Lutetia. He felt that in the present circumstances there could no longer be any question of conquests and victorious offensives for him, but that he must concentrate solely on bringing his army back, as far as possible intact, to his base at Agedincum in order to try later to join up again with Caesar. After a short but violent battle in the plain of Grenelle which ended in a total defeat for the enemy, he started off without any thought of following up his victory. He had but one end in view—to rejoin his leader. There is some uncertainty as to whether the meeting took place at Auxerre or Joigny.

When Caesar saw him arrive at the head of his legions he was filled with a great joy. There, once more, was his whole army assembled round him in full force, its efficiency in no way diminished, ready to continue the struggle. Meanwhile the soldiers of Labienus, freed from the gloomy misgivings which had come near to shaking their confidence in their *imperator*, hailed him with triumphant cheers.

With the 'change of orientation' among the Aedui, the war for the liberation of Gaul entered upon a new phase. Having decided to side with the nationalists, the former allies of Rome displayed an intense activity and put their great resources of money, material and the weight of their influence at the service of the common cause. They were joined by other smaller nations which had become accustomed to move in their orbit. Any who hesitated were won over by means of subsidies which were lavishly distributed. If this method did not succeed, that of terror was employed. As the hostages Caesar had assembled at Noviodunum were in their hands, they tortured those who came from refractory provinces. It was thus not merely as simple supporters of the league directed by Vercingetorix

that the Aedui entered the war against the Romans. They assumed the place of associates of equal rank, and their leaders invited the chief of the Arverni to consult with them about the conduct of the war. The conference was held at Bibracte. From the start great divergencies of view were discernible. The Aedui wanted to direct operations. Vercingetorix would not hear of it. He wished to remain commander-in-chief. The conflict became bitter. Unable to reach an agreement, they decided to call a general assembly of all the Gallic peoples who had risen in the cause of liberty : it should pronounce the final decision. The assembly met, also at Bibracte. It confirmed Vercingetorix in his command, thus causing the Aedui bitter disappointment which they tried in vain to disguise. As they had become too deeply involved, they could no longer turn back, but from that time their zeal noticeably cooled off and the two traitorous emissaries, Eporedorix and Viridomarus, who had been nursing the highest ambitions, submitted very reluctantly to the authority of Vercingetorix.

The latter had arrived at the height of his power during the months of June and July 52. His was a double triumph : Caesar, forced to give up the siege of Gergovia, was beating a retreat ; the whole of Gaul had entrusted her destiny to him, Vercingetorix, and put herself under his orders. It was he who for the future was to control all the active forces of the country ; it was he who was to elaborate the plan of operations and to be responsible for its execution. This plan appears to have been vast and bold, but at the same time somewhat confused and contradictory. He renounced all idea of regular warfare. He did not want to test the strength of his arms in a pitched battle against Caesar. It looks as though, notwithstanding his enormous numerical superiority, he feared to measure himself against the Romans in open combat. His intention, like that of Cassivellaunus in Britain, was to wear out Caesar's legions and reduce them to hunger by slow but merciless attrition. To achieve this end the cities belonging to the league were ordered to adopt a scorched-earth policy ' which would make their sovereignty and liberty secure for all time ' : they had to destroy all their stocks of corn and set fire to their barns. This, however, was not the only way in which he was going to carry on the struggle. He did not propose to give up all idea of military action. In fact, he had conceived a plan on a very large scale, but it was not directed against Caesar himself, and it would not be carried out by his own troops. The plan apparently envisaged the invasion of the Roman Province

with the object of cutting off Caesar's retreat. The Gabali of Gévaudan (a people within the Arverni zone of influence), supported by several frontier tribes, were launched against the Helvii of the Vivarais, allies of Rome whose land bordered on the Province. The Cadurci of Quercy and the Ruteni of Rouergue were to ravage the country of the Volcae Arecomici, which formed part of it (the region of Languedoc with Nîmes as capital). The Aedui and their satellites—the Segusiavi of the Lyonnais—were to attack the Allobroges so as to prevent them from coming to the help of the Romans at the critical moment. But as he doubtless had no great illusions about the bellicose ardour of his new associates, he entered into secret negotiations with the Allobroges at the same time as he declared war on them, and tried to buy their leaders, promising them the whole of the Roman Province in the event of victory. The Allobroges refused. They did not want to take sides one way or the other. Let Caesar and Vercingetorix devour each other: as for them, they preferred to keep out of the conflict.

It was therefore the Roman Province itself which was the most immediately and dangerously threatened. The legate L. Julius Caesar, that humble and self-effacing cousin of the conqueror who from time to time appeared furtively in the shadow of his glory, had raised an army of defence there numbering twenty-two cohorts, or a little more than two legions. This, however, was almost nothing in comparison with the formidable mass of rebels whose attack seemed to be imminent.

Caesar was aware of all these schemes. Everything points to the fact that among Vercingetorix's followers he had some very intelligent spies, who kept him regularly informed about his opponent's activities. On his side also, preparations were going forward. For the moment he was cut off from the Province and could not communicate with Italy. The next important step he would have to take, now that he had effected a junction with Labienus, was to reach his cousin's army in spite of enemy obstruction, and to ward off the danger of invasion threatening this land which had become Roman. He accordingly set out across the territory of the Lingones, who had remained faithful to Rome, in the direction of the Sequani, hoping that he would be able to pass through their country in safety. Vercingetorix interpreted this move as a sign that Caesar was in flight and intended to give up the land of the Gauls for ever. He therefore decided that the moment had come to inflict upon him that final defeat which hitherto

he had escaped. The way he set about it was not very well inspired. It was to his cavalry that he assigned the task of carrying on the battle, and 'in order that it should be more heartened for this attack', he for his part 'would keep all his forces in front of the camp and thereby intimidate the enemy'.

The great parade which Vercingetorix had imagined began.<sup>205</sup> Before his camp, in interminable lines, stretched the ranks of Gallic warriors fully armed, ready for their passive rôle, while the horsemen, divided into three divisions, attacked the oncoming Roman army in the centre and on both flanks. Caesar showed no surprise, so that one wonders if he had not been previously warned of the action and of the way it would be launched. His army halted. His cavalry, also divided into three columns, made a counter-attack. But while the foot soldiers of Vercingetorix had been reduced to mere bystanders, Caesar's legionaries were thrown into the centre of the struggle and came to the rescue wherever the horsemen found themselves in difficulty or danger. For a while the issue of the battle remained uncertain. Then, all at once, Caesar unleashed his Germans. Their overwhelming charge hurled back the right wing of the Gauls and put them to flight. Vercingetorix, seeing his cavalry in wild retreat, promptly withdrew his display of warriors, and without even re-entering the camp marched off towards Alesia, merely giving orders to have his baggage sent on. Caesar left his own where it was under the guard of two legions, and set out in pursuit of this immense crowd of armed men, who were making off in disorder without having even tried to fight. The chase lasted till sundown. Caesar tells us that the Gauls lost three thousand men. At Gergovia he had lost seven hundred himself. The revenge was adequate. At one stroke the situation was reversed. The wandering and persecuted conqueror once more held the reins of his destiny. They were never again to be snatched from his grasp.

Night had come. The Gauls, enclosed behind the mighty walls of Alesia,<sup>206</sup> felt safe at last and gradually recovered from the shock and excitement. The exhausted Roman troops took a rest. Caesar went to sleep with a light heart. The next day he inspected the vicinity. He saw the holy city of Gaul perched at the summit of Mont Auxois. On all sides it was surrounded by peaks of equal height. He at once grasped the advantages and difficulties of this position, hard to take by storm but well suited for a methodical siege. That was what Caesar decided upon.

The chief difficulty lay in the vast extent of the fortifications to be constructed. This, however, was nothing new for his legionaries, who set to work with joyful ardour, for they knew that they were now approaching the end of their hardships. Vercingetorix tried to hinder them by an attack of his cavalry. Caesar sent his own to meet them, but they were not strong enough and began to give way. Thereupon he dispatched his Germans once more. The very sight of them produced the desired effect: the Gallic horsemen turned and fled back to the town for shelter. The gates were too narrow, however, and the men were too numerous. Those who were in the greatest hurry abandoned their horses and tried to scale the walls. An unimaginable tumult followed. The massacre was in full swing. To add to the rout, Caesar ordered some of his legions to advance a little way in front of the entrenchments. At that point the panic reached its climax. The Gallic troops, thinking that the Romans were preparing to attack them, left their positions and tried to take refuge inside the town. In order to force them to stay outside, Vercingetorix was obliged to shut the gates. The Germans came to a standstill at the ramparts. As there was no one left to slaughter, they collected the horses which were wandering about abandoned by their riders, and came back with this precious booty.

This defeat had great repercussions among the Gauls. It hit Vercingetorix so hard that he resolved to evacuate his outer defences and to install his troops in Alesia itself. At the same time he made a decision which, in spite of all the explanations that have been attempted, still seems strange and shows how deeply disturbed he must have been. He sent away all his horsemen on the pretext of lack of forage. According to Caesar, he ordered them 'to go each one to his own country and collect for the war all men of a suitable age to bear arms'. He might as well have kept those he had on the spot, one would have thought, changing them if need be into foot soldiers, instead of turning them into thousands of would-be recruiting agents. It is to be wondered whether this decision did not arise from other reasons more closely associated with the defeat.<sup>207</sup> It is vain to formulate theories on the basis of the meagre documentation which has come down to us. We shall never know the details of the painful interview which must have taken place between Vercingetorix and the leaders of the units he dismissed. All we know is that they left Alesia during the night, utilizing the openings that still remained in the as yet unfinished fortifications of Caesar's blockade. Simultaneously a general

mobilization was announced for all the Gallic peoples. It was the distress signal of a man who felt he was driven to the edge of an abyss. If no one came to his assistance he would perish 'and eighty thousand picked men would perish with him'.

This appeal, if it were listened to, might bring a million or more men to Alesia. That would be more than enough to overwhelm and crush the fifty thousand Roman legionaries. Caesar, informed of what was going on, did not fail to take precautions. In addition to the line of the blockade which was to encircle Alesia, he made a second line, inside which was his own camp, thus transformed into a vast fortress able to resist every attack.

Meanwhile Vercingetorix was organizing resistance in the beleagured city. First and foremost he had to secure the provisioning of his army. The civilian population was therefore deprived of the cattle they had brought in in large quantities when, foreseeing the siege, they took refuge within the walls of the fortress. Corn was severely rationed until the arrival of further supplies which the mass levy throughout Gaul was expected to bring him. From time to time he risked a few violent sorties aimed at hindering the operations of the besiegers, but without any noticeable result.

The days passed and no help came. The authority and prestige of Vercingetorix seemed to be declining. Voices were to be heard in favour of capitulation. An assembly of leaders was held to decide what was to be done. Opinions were divided : some wanted to give up without prolonging a useless struggle, while others suggested an armed sortie to break the enemy's hold. The Arvernian Crotognatus, among others, declared himself in favour of resisting to the end, proposing if need be to kill the old men and invalids so as to have enough food for the combatants. They did not go to such lengths, but orders were given for all the civilian population to leave Alesia *en bloc*.<sup>208</sup> The people obeyed, and on leaving the town made their way towards the Roman camp where they hoped to be received. They declared themselves ready to work as slaves if they could only have a little to eat. Caesar was pitiless. He placed sentinels on the ramparts with orders to drive them away. In the *Commentaries* he does not even trouble to justify his conduct. Dion Cassius has at least tried to find some explanation. 'Caesar did not have enough provisions to be able to give any to strangers ; he thought, besides, that all this multitude, if forced back to their own homes—he had no doubt that they would be received—would make the famine more

terrible.' He was mistaken : Vercingetorix was as merciless towards his compatriots as his adversary had been. The gates of Alesia remained firmly shut, and after wandering aimlessly between the two camps they died miserably of hunger and exhaustion.

At last the relief army arrived. It consisted of 270,000 men, of whom eight thousand were horsemen. It was placed under the command of a sort of directorate of four : Commius of the Atrebrates, the Arvernian Vercassivellaunus (a cousin of Vercingetorix) and the two Aedui Eporedorix and Viridomarus. A council, formed of delegates from the principal cities, was to assist them in conducting operations.

The battle took place the following day. As usual, it opened with a cavalry engagement. For more than six hours the fighting continued without any definite result. Towards evening Caesar, who wanted to finish it, brought out his Germans whom he had been holding in reserve. Massed together at one point, they charged in close ranks and with such fury that they put the enemy to flight. The Gauls returned to their camp with all speed. Thus ended their first contact with Caesar. The troops of Vercingetorix, which had been placed in front of their entrenchments, ready to intervene at the decisive moment of the battle, prudently retreated behind their fortifications.

The Gauls let one day pass, and then, in conjunction with the defenders of Alesia, they launched a combined night attack aimed at striking Caesar from the front and the rear. The soldiers of Vercassivellaunus were the first to rush forward, with wild shouts which were to be the signal for the troops of Vercingetorix. This twilight battle was desperate and fierce, and the losses were heavy on both sides. Vercassivellaunus, who was reduced to fighting alone against Caesar, finally wavered. Vercingetorix, trying to bring up his forces and to fill the first ditches, delayed too long over these operations and heard of his cousin's retreat before he had reached the entrenchments.

Twice defeated, the Gauls wanted to make a third attempt. The 'directorate' met and worked out a new plan of action. They agreed to make their first attack upon the feeblest point of Caesar's defences, Mont Réa, which, on account of its vast area, had been left outside his lines. Only two legions defended its approaches. Shock troops, numbering sixty thousand, chosen from among the best warriors and placed under the command of Vercassivellaunus, were given the task of capturing it. At the same time, eight thousand horsemen were to

invade the plain stretching between the two camps, and two hundred thousand foot soldiers, commanded by Eporedorix and Viridomarus, were ordered to storm Caesar's fortifications. Meanwhile, the troops of Vercingetorix, massed on the ramparts of Alesia, were to attempt a sortie.

This time, Caesar had to face several simultaneous attacks. He directed operations from his observation post on the mountain of Flavigny. He sent reinforcements to the threatened points, withdrawing men from those places where the situation was under control. No unit was idle. All were fighting—first on one front, then on another. These interchangeable defences enabled him to hold his own, but demanded prodigies of endurance from the combatants. Therefore he was seen mingling with them, passing from one cohort to another, encouraging them, exhorting them not to yield, explaining to them that the fruit of five years of war depended on this day, on this very hour. While Vercassivellaunus was storming Mont Réa, Vercingetorix climbed the slopes of the mountain of Flavigny, and Caesar himself was in peril. Before these ceaselessly renewed waves of Gallic troops the legionaries wavered and cried out for reinforcements. Caesar sent them Decimus Brutus with a few cohorts. That was not enough. He sent them others, led by Fabius. That was not enough. Then he hurried to the spot himself at the head of the last few hundred soldiers he had been able to rally round him. The magic of his presence had an instantaneous effect. The ranks drew together once more, all fears vanished. A barrier of steel suddenly rose as by a miracle in front of Vercingetorix, who was thrown back and retired disheartened.

Without waiting to draw breath, Caesar rushed to help the defenders of Mont Réa, taking along in his train all he met with—horsemen, foot soldiers, auxiliaries. Drunk with the smell of battle, his beautiful scarlet cloak floating in the wind, he raised his sword high to show the way to his horsemen, who were following him, breathless and radiant. This cavalcade across the plain separating the two heights caused an indescribable sensation. From both sides an immense clamour arose : shouts vibrating with enthusiasm from the defenders of the mountain, cries of impotent rage from the assailants. At the sight of their leader the legionaries threw away their javelins and, brandishing their swords, fell with unbridled fury upon the Gauls, who offered a fierce resistance. Then Caesar's reinforcements came upon them from the rear. They wanted to flee, but the Germans



cut off their retreat and joyfully abandoned themselves to an utter carnage, butchering the compact masses of routed Gauls. Caesar was present, this time as a spectator, watching the scene from the top of his hill. The standards captured from the enemy were brought to him. They accumulated ; from moment to moment the heap became higher. There were seventy-four in all. During this time Vercingetorix, warned of the disaster which had befallen his countrymen at the foot of Mont Réa, abandoned all offensive action and led his army back to their entrenchments. As for the main body of Gallic troops—those 200,000 men who, drawn up in front of their camp, were waiting, according to plan, for the moment to attack Caesar's fortifications—when they heard the signal for retreat, they abandoned their positions and fled. The attitude of Eporedorix and Viridomarus, who commanded them, is still inconceivable, and Camille Jullian is right in describing it as 'indifference amounting to treason'.

Sparing his soldiers, exhausted after this day of continuous effort, Caesar sent the Germans in pursuit of the routed enemy. The stragglers were massacred. A few managed to escape thanks to the growing darkness. The majority surrendered.

Vercingetorix returned to Alesia completely broken. The next day he called the leaders together. As everything was lost and they were forced 'to yield to fortune', he offered himself as a victim of expiation. To appease the victor, let them put him to death or hand him over alive to the Romans ! The cowardly assembly was undecided. It was not that the sacrifice seemed to them too hard ; they merely did not know which course would please Caesar best. To be on the safe side, they sent a deputation to ask what he wished them to do. Caesar remained unmoved. His orders were brief : they must lay down their arms and hand over their leaders.

At the foot of the hill which rose in front of the Roman camp a small platform had been erected. Caesar had taken his place there. Motionless on his curule chair, already resembling his future statues of marble, he contemplated the walls of the noble Arvernian city which lay crushed at his feet. The gates of the town opened and a melancholy procession approached. Here were the leaders of the Gallic army who were being brought to him as he had ordered. Vercingetorix was among them.<sup>209</sup> One by one, they filed past the conqueror. As they passed, their weapons fell with a dull crash at the feet of the consul. Meanwhile, frozen into a gloomy silence, the dark masses of

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an infinite number of prisoners waited for their fate to be decided. Caesar's glance embraced the scene. Then he pronounced his verdict : for Vercingetorix, chains ; the others were to be pardoned. As for the prisoners, he made a present of them to his soldiers, except for the Aedui and the Arverni, who were to receive preferential treatment.

*Last Attempts at Resistance*

HAVING settled the fate of the vanquished, Caesar entered Alesia. As he was passing through the town he stopped in front of a temple, where he was shown a sword hanging as a trophy from the roof. The authorities had had it publicly exhibited there to fire the courage of the defenders during the last days of the siege, claiming that it was Caesar's own sword which had been snatched from him during the battle. Caesar made no comment. He let it remain where it was.

Then he left for Bibracte, while his administrative assistants set to work making an inventory of all the riches of the holy city which were going to swell the Roman treasury—and his own. At Bibracte, the capitulation of the whole Aeduan nation was announced to him. They had not suffered greatly from the war. Their contingents (35,000 men, supposing the agreement had been scrupulously observed) had remained in waiting during the final battle, and ceased to be passive only when they ran away. Of their leaders, only one refused to lay down his arms and took refuge with the Treveri. The others, prostrate before the conqueror, humbly begged for mercy. Caesar granted it and liberated all the Aeduan prisoners. Such clemency, he thought, should win the people over to him. The Arvernian leaders came next. Among them no doubt were those who from the beginning had opposed the plans of Vercingetorix and now saw their opportunity for revenge. They likewise offered the complete submission of their country, and declared themselves ready to obey Caesar's will in all respects. To show them his satisfaction, he liberated the Arvernian prisoners too. Thus the ground was prepared, as he believed, for a final reconciliation between Gaul and Rome. He knew, however, that it was far from being an accomplished fact. The apparent calm which had followed the surrender of Vercingetorix did not deceive him. Numerous tribes were still under arms and seemed in no way disposed to give up the battle. After a brief period of confusion, resulting from the collapse of the two states which had held the supremacy in the conduct of the war, the others began to regroup

and resumed their councils. It even seems as though now they were free from the control of the Arverni and the Aedui, these peoples were more interested in the struggle and showed greater initiative and boldness. Leaders came forward who at the time of Vercingetorix had obstinately remained aloof: Correus among the Bellovaci, Dumnaeus among the Andecavi. Ambiorix reappeared from the heart of the Ardennes. Others, overlooked by the 'four-fold directorate', joined them: Lucterius among the Cadurci, Gutuatrus of the Carnutes, Drappes of the Senones. At their conferences new tactics were evolved. What had happened at Alesia served as a lesson. They understood that even with a powerful army, if it were concentrated in one place, they would never succeed in beating the Romans. If, however, several tribes struck simultaneously at different points, it would be impossible for the enemy to meet all these attacks at the same time.

The fire blazed up again in the country of the Bituriges, who could not forget the recent massacre of the inhabitants of Avaricum. Caesar, warned in time by his agents, did not allow himself to be forestalled. In spite of the intense cold and the difficult roads (it was in December), he opened the campaign which he directed in person. He arranged to keep his preparations secret until the last moment. His appearance at the head of two legions produced the surprise effect which he was counting upon. The peasants had not had time to bring in their crops and to take refuge in the towns. The surprise was all the greater because, in order to take them unawares, he had not given his usual warning signal—fires started everywhere as he went, proclaiming his arrival to the people upon whom his vengeance was to fall. The population tried to find shelter in the neighbourhood. Caesar's troops spread throughout the region and rounded them up wherever they went. This manhunt was laborious, however, and lasted a long time. It was only at the end of six weeks that the Bituriges 'were led to accept peace', as the *Commentaries* have expressed it. As a reward for their efforts, the soldiers received a gratuity of 200 sesterces each. The centurions were given a thousand. Then everyone went into winter quarters and Caesar, establishing himself at Bibracte, opened the assizes. A fortnight later a deputation sent by the same Bituriges arrived to ask his help and protection against the Carnutes, who, probably angered at seeing them make peace with the Romans, had declared war on them. The name of the Carnutes evoked painful memories for Caesar. This cannot have failed to increase his rancour. Leaving the Eleventh and Thirteenth Legions, who had taken part in

the campaign against the Bituriges, to rest, he summoned the Fourteenth and Sixth from their winter quarters on the Saône and started off to punish the Carnutes. When the latter heard of Caesar's approach they proceeded in the usual way: they left their homes and fled in all directions. The Romans entered a deserted city. This time, it seemed that nothing could save Cenabum from the fate Caesar had in store for it. Yet, by a miracle, it was spared. The winter, which was particularly hard that year, had increased in severity. In order not to expose his soldiers to the cold, Caesar quartered them in the abandoned houses, which were thus saved from destruction. But he did not push on any farther, and, leaving the Carnutes to wander about in the frozen country, he contented himself with the military occupation of Cenabum, thinking that his presence in the area would be enough to awe this rebellious nation. There was, however, nothing to prove that he would be left to finish the winter in peace.

Several times already deputations of the Remi had warned him that their neighbours the Bellovaci were plotting something. At the time of the allocation of winter quarters following the capitulation of Alesia, Caesar had sent two legions to protect them in the event of aggression. Now matters were taking a rather serious turn. Correus, the leader of the Bellovaci, had concluded an alliance with Commius<sup>210</sup> of the Atrebatas, and subsequently got in touch with all the neighbouring tribes, with the object of forming a new anti-Roman coalition. Thus, after a short eclipse, Commius the clever diplomat, who had been the mainspring of the enterprise attempted under Vercingetorix, reappeared on the political horizon. It is not surprising to find that he had escaped unharmed from the disaster. He had returned to his country with the modest contingent which he had provided as his contribution to the common cause, and which had been spared from combat thanks to his prudent tactics. He was now forming plans of revenge. His own means were too limited, but he nursed hopes of drawing into active participation the nation of the Bellovaci, who were still the strongest military power in Gaul. They had originally refused to take part in the attempt of Vercingetorix, alleging that they wanted to make war independently and on their own account. It was only due to the pressing demands of Commius, who had numerous friends among them, that the Bellovaci finally consented to send to the relief of Alesia two thousand men (instead of the ten thousand asked of them). Now Commius was putting all his energy and power of persuasion to work in order to draw them into the war. The

pretext was well chosen and he led up to the final solution with masterly skill. Even if the Belloyaci did not choose to measure themselves against the redoubtable conqueror, declaring that they only wanted to take up arms in defence of their own soil, they could not tolerate the increasing power of the Remi, their immediate neighbours, who, since the defection of the Aedui, were first in Caesar's favour and were considered by him as the leading nation of all Gaul. The first thing to do, therefore, was to provoke the Remi. This was best done through the Suessiones who, reduced to insignificance after the collapse of the Belgic confederation in which they had played a predominant rôle, had been placed under their tutelage. Thus, one move would lead to another. The attack against the Suessiones would automatically bring about the intervention of their protector state—in other words, the Remi—which, in turn, would draw the Roman troops into the conflict.

Meanwhile Commius, who by nature seems to have been more of a negotiator than a soldier, was intensely active diplomatically. He succeeded in persuading the Caleti, the Aulerici, the Vellocasses and the Ambiani to join the new league. He got into touch with the Germans, whose decisive rôle in the military operations at Alesia had not escaped his notice, and went to the banks of the Rhine to negotiate with their leaders.

Caesar was not long in replying. The two legions stationed among the Remi were ordered to leave at once for the country of the Suessiones. Labienus, who was then at Besançon, was told to send one of his legions there. The Eleventh, billeted among the Aedui, went to Cenabum, and Trebonius was put in command of those who were to remain there, for it was of course Caesar himself who was to direct the operations. 'Thus it was', writes his friend and confidant Hirtius, to whom we owe the Eighth and last book of the *Commentaries*, 'that as far as the distribution of quarters and military exigencies allowed, he only required his legions to endure the fatigue of his expeditions in turn, whilst never taking any rest himself.' Accordingly he was off again without delay.

At once the affair spread. Caesar had seen through the subtle game Commius was playing. Ignoring the insignificant Suessiones, he attacked the Bellovaci themselves and ordered his troops to occupy their territory. Once again he entered a land completely deserted by its inhabitants. A few scattered natives were captured nonetheless; they were spies left behind to watch the enemy's movements. By

questioning them Caesar was able to obtain some information about the position and plans of Correus who, supported by the popular party and strangling the opposition of the aristocratic Senate, had just seized power and assumed supreme command. According to his informants, their new chief had decided to fight Caesar if he had no more than three legions with him, rather than meet his entire army later on. If, on the other hand, he brought more numerous troops, Correus would avoid an open battle and content himself with harassing the Romans by laying ambushes to disorganize the delivery of their supplies.

In possession of this information, Caesar made his plans. He calculated that with his four legions he could safely engage the enemy, and resolved at all costs to provoke a battle. The adversary was apparently prepared to fight against three legions. There was therefore one too many. He only had to camouflage it in some way. That was not difficult. The Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Legions marched in the front; then came the baggage; and the Eleventh closed the procession at a certain distance from the others.

Caesar arrived at the expected time with his 'three' legions at the entrance to the Aisne valley. Opposite him the Bellovaci and their allies had occupied a large mountain which bordered and commanded the stream. He was waiting for an attack. Correus made no move. He tried to draw him on by displaying his legions in battle array. This, too, had no effect. The Bellovaci, having probably discovered Caesar's stratagem, showed no desire to engage in a battle.

What was Caesar to do? The enemy was numerous and held a strong position. Unwilling to risk an attack of which the result seemed uncertain, he resolved to establish his camp on a neighbouring height opposite the enemy. His legionaries set to work and soon new ramparts, wide parallel ditches, towers several stories high, and bridges connecting them began to appear. Meanwhile reinforcements flowed in: Trebonius with three legions, and the cavalry provided by the subjected peoples—Remi, Lingones, and others. 'At the sight of such constructions and such concentration of troops,' writes Jullian, 'it was believed that the days of Alesia were to begin again.'

Correus, however, did not repeat the mistake of Vercingetorix. Although he too had received reinforcements—his ally Commius had just returned with the horsemen enlisted as a result of his negotiations with the people of the Rhineland—he decided to retreat in order to start upon a guerrilla war.

Caesar wanted to prevent him from doing this. When he saw that the Bellovaci were preparing to evacuate their camp, he brought out his legions with a cavalry vanguard, ready to charge. Correus, in a hurry to be off, had recourse to a curious procedure designed to make any attack impossible during his retreat. Hirtius has described it for us: 'Passing the bundles of straw which had served them as beds from hand to hand . . . they [the Bellovaci] placed them in front of their lines, and at nightfall, upon a given signal, they set them all on fire. In this way a curtain of flames suddenly hid their troops from the eyes of the Romans.'

When Caesar saw this conflagration he understood the trick that had been played on him. But he would not admit himself beaten and ordered his horsemen to advance. A few intrepid spirits tried to force this wall of smoke and flame. They had to return, half suffocated. Meanwhile the Bellovaci were able to complete their operations undisturbed and withdraw in perfect order. By the time the fire had died down, they were encamped eight miles away in a very strong position. Caesar had to begin the work of fortifying a camp all over again.

From their heights the Bellovaci launched small raiding parties made up of horsemen and foot soldiers, who, according to Hirtius, 'did the Romans a great deal of harm when they went in search of forage'.

Correus did not leave it at that. He resolved to embark on a bold operation, for which he formed shock troops composed of particularly brave men—6,000 foot and 1,000 mounted. He chose his ground very cleverly: a plain in the neighbourhood of his camp, bounded on all sides by woods and by a river which was difficult to cross. He foresaw that the abundance of corn and forage to be found there could not fail to attract the Romans. He accordingly planned that, after allowing the foragers and their escort to reach the plain, he would surround them as with a net, by means of his troops previously hidden in the woods, and so capture them all at one stroke.

As in every other instance, Caesar had his spies in the camp of the Bellovaci. Through them, he learnt of this plan. He decided to counter the surprise Correus had in store for him with another prepared by himself. The Germans were chosen to strengthen the usual escort, and the legions were ordered to hold themselves in readiness and to intervene at the slightest sign of trouble.

It all happened as he had foreseen. When the Romans arrived,



Correus came out of his ambush, and at the head of a small number of men bore down upon them. The battle started between the horsemen: little isolated groups contesting with varying degrees of fortune. The action continued, still undecided. Then he ordered his infantry to come out of the woods. This was the moment for which Caesar was waiting in order to throw his legions into the struggle. The Bellovaci, taken unawares, became confused, weakened and fled. Correus alone held his ground and went on fighting. In vain did the Romans order him to surrender. He replied with blows. It was impossible to get near him. He held out against all his enemies and struck back without a moment's respite. Unable to overcome his resistance, his infuriated assailants sought to slaughter him like a wild beast. They withdrew a little and from a distance riddled him with arrows. Thus, with his face to the enemy, fighting for his country's liberty until his last breath was spent, died Correus, the indomitable leader of the Bellovaci, 'the man whose spirit no misfortune had the power to break'.<sup>211</sup>

His death precipitated the general downfall. The Bellovaci lost all hope when they heard of it and gave up the idea of continuing the struggle. Commius, seeing that all was lost, left his allies and went to take refuge with the Germans. The senators, who after all were not sorry to be rid of this 'foreigner' and of the 'demagogue' Correus, met in council and decided to send a deputation to Caesar.

When their envoys were admitted to the presence of the conqueror they implored his mercy. They begged that he would take pity on their nation, which had lost everything. It was Correus, that 'agitator of the masses', who was responsible for the war. They had been obliged to submit to his rule.

Caesar remained unmoved by their lamentations. He reminded them of the time when Correus had not yet appeared on the horizon. Then, in masterly fashion combining irony, disdain, and threats, he added that he knew very well 'that the responsibility for wrongdoing is easily blamed on the dead', and that 'no single person is powerful enough to provoke a war and carry it on against the will of the leaders, including the Senate and all the influential people, with the sole aid of a weak populace'. Nevertheless, considering that they had suffered enough by causing their own ruin, he contented himself with the punishment which they had brought upon themselves.

The defeat of the Bellovaci did not bring resistance to an end. The struggle continued—bitter, tenacious, implacable. The men left their

villages, deserted their land, formed themselves into small independent bands and carried on a guerrilla war against the Romans. Like a phantom warrior, the elusive Ambiorix continued his raids, helped by the unanimous complicity of all the people. This constituted a permanent act of defiance flung in the face of the conqueror. His exploits finally exasperated Caesar to such a degree that immediately he had stamped out the Bellovaci revolt, he set out to ravage the country of the Eburones, neglecting a rather serious uprising among the Pictones, in Poitou, of which he had just been informed. Giving up all hope of laying hands on Ambiorix himself, Caesar attacked his subjects. 'He judged', writes Hirtius, 'that his honour required at least this much satisfaction: to make a desert of the country and to destroy everything to be found there, men, houses, and cattle, so utterly that Ambiorix—should fate permit him to survive—detested by his own people, would no longer be able to return to his state after such a disaster.' So the country of the Eburones was once more invaded and pillaged, the people were massacred, everything was set on fire. Desolation reigned.

Meanwhile, in the west, Drappes of the Senones, Lucterius of the Cadurci, and Dumnaeus of the Andecavi had formed an alliance and were defying the legate Caninius. Unable to deal with them single-handed, he appealed to his colleague Fabius who was stationed in Armorica and brought his troops to help him. The three Gallic chiefs were imprudent enough to engage in battle against the Roman legions and were beaten. When Dumnaeus reached his homeland, he met with the usual fate of the defeated. His countrymen, abandoning the struggle, threw themselves upon the mercy of the conqueror and drove their disgraced leader out of the country. He went into exile among the Bretons and lived in a remote corner of their peninsula. We do not know what finally became of him.<sup>212</sup>

Drappes and Lucterius recovered from their defeat. Gathering what was left of their troops, they formed a partisan corps two to three thousand men strong, and returning to the project which had failed in 52, planned to invade the Roman Province.<sup>213</sup> It must be understood that this was an operation of a purely episodic character, a sort of raid which was to provide them with rich booty without in any way affecting the political or military situation. It could, however, if successful, be a great blow to Caesar's prestige, revealing his inability, in spite of all his victories, to protect the Roman possessions entrusted to his care from the danger of enemy invasion.

Caninius, freed by the victory of Fabius from his immediate worries, went in pursuit of the two Gallic leaders and succeeded in catching up with them. Unwilling to measure their strength against an enemy four times superior in numbers, they took refuge in the fortress of Uxellodunum (Puy d'Issolu in the department of Lot) which was on their way. The population welcomed them with enthusiasm and declared that they were ready to take up arms with them to resist the Romans.

Remarkable natural defences made it impossible to take this town by storm. Caninius began the siege, but Lucterius and Drappes did not allow themselves to be shut up in Uxellodunum, as Vercingetorix had in Alesia. They wanted to secure their freedom of movement, as Vercingetorix had done at Gergovia. They installed a garrison of two thousand men inside the city and with the remainder of their troops established themselves some eight miles away. From there they sent into Uxellodunum the provisions which they collected in considerable quantities in the district, thanks to the spontaneous co-operation of the inhabitants.

Things began very well for the besieged, but their luck did not last. Lucterius was surprised by the Romans while escorting a convoy of food. He was obliged to leave everything and take to flight. Drappes, remaining in the camp with a handful of men, could not hold out against the attack of Caninius and was taken prisoner. The defenders of Uxellodunum were suddenly deprived of all contact with the outside world. Nevertheless they did not think of laying down their arms. On the contrary, they resolutely accepted their fate. The entire population was ready to continue the struggle. They knew, moreover, that Caesar had only one more summer to spend in Gaul, and that it was a matter of holding out a few months longer, for they supposed that they would have nothing to fear after his departure.

When he had completed the extermination of the Eburones, Caesar had gone to the country of the Carnutes. There, too, a great criminal remained to be punished. It was Gutuartrus, the leader of the revolt of the previous year and the instigator of the Cenabum massacre. Since the defeat he had been in hiding, and hardly any of his compatriots knew the secret of his whereabouts. On arriving, Caesar had demanded that he should be handed over immediately. He must have accompanied the order with undisguised threats, because the whole population started to search for the fugitive. In the end he was caught. Brought to the Roman camp, Gutuartrus was condemned

to the same cruel fate as the Senonian leader Acco on a previous occasion : first rods, then the axe.

In the meantime Caesar had received news that the defenders of Uxellodunum were still holding out. 'Although their small number seemed to him contemptible,' writes Hirtius, that faithful mirror of his master's mind, 'Caesar nevertheless considered that it was necessary to punish their obstinacy with severity so that all the other Gauls should not be tempted to think it had been their persistency rather than their strength which had failed them in opposing the Romans, and so that other cities, following this example, should not try to regain their liberty by making the most of favourable conditions.' What this writer does not dare to say is that Caesar could not think of leaving Gaul before he had completely reduced it to subjection, and time was running short. Therefore he went himself to the scene of action. When he saw the location of the town he realized at once that it was impregnable. The severest blockade would have been useless : the number of mouths to be fed appeared to be small in proportion to the quantity of stores that had been accumulated. There was no hope of conquering it either by the sword or by starvation. Very well, he would conquer it by thirst ! And so the battle for water began.

A river <sup>214</sup> flowed through the valley surrounding the mountain on which Uxellodunum was perched. The besieged could reach it only by making a steep and difficult descent. Caesar placed his war machines, his archers and his slingers opposite and gave orders to massacre all who dared to venture near it. Then the population turned for its water supply to a single place just inside the walls, where there was an abundant spring. It therefore became necessary to prevent them from going there. With this object in view, Caesar had an enormous earthwork constructed, sixty feet high and facing the spring. A ten-storied tower was erected upon it. From the top of this tower a rain of missiles beat down upon those who were foolhardy enough to come within range. The effect was soon felt : throughout the city, men and beasts suffered terribly from thirst. Instead of capitulating, however, they resolved to overcome the difficulty. The structure which Caesar had put up was made of wood. The inhabitants of Uxellodunum filled some barrels with tallow, pitch and other inflammable matter, and rolled them in flames on to the Roman constructions. A violent fire broke out. It was put out with great difficulty, but the constructions had become unserviceable. The population of the town was exultant. Their triumph was short-lived.

While the building of his gigantic tower was going on, Caesar had ordered that underground channels should be hollowed out in the direction of the trickling-currents which fed the spring. Finally he succeeded in diverting them, and one day the besieged discovered with terror that their never-failing spring was dry. To them, this appeared to be more than an accident of nature. Like all the Gauls, they regarded springs as protective and kindly divinities. They interpreted the stopping of the water as a sign of displeasure. The spring disapproved of their resistance and was making this known to them by depriving them of its life-giving bounties. They had known how to face all the hardships of the siege, but they did not dare to brave the anger of their divinity. So, they surrendered.

Caesar invented a particularly cruel punishment for them. All those who had taken up arms against him had their hands cut off while their lives were spared, so that for many years to come they would be living witnesses to his treatment of rebels.

The end of Gallic independence is symbolized far more strikingly by the fall of Uxellodunum than by the defeat of Vercingetorix. This time, it was not a conquered chief who laid down his arms, but an entire heroic city which gave up the fight, thinking thus to carry out the divine will.

The gods had spoken, and man had bowed to their decree. No one was left to oppose the victor. Drappes, taken prisoner, voluntarily starved himself to death. Lucterius, who changed his hiding-place every night and had taken shelter with an Arvernian, 'a great friend of the Roman people', was given up to Caesar by his host. He was sent to prison, where he joined Vercingetorix still patiently dragging out the miserable existence of a beast waiting to be led to the slaughter. Only one man escaped from the great disaster : Commius, king of the Atrebrates.

He did not stay long among the Germans. Secretly returning to his country, deprived of all his titles and honours, he formed a band of partisans, and taking to the woods, started infesting the roads and pillaging the Roman convoys. The same Volusenus, who once had made a treacherous attempt on his life, was charged to capture him. Once during the chase they chanced to come upon each other face to face. At the sight of the man to whom he had vowed undying hatred Commius spurred his horse on with fury, and throwing himself upon Volusenus, pierced him with his spear. Mortally

wounded, the Roman was taken back to camp and the pursuit was abandoned.

Having satisfied his revenge, Commius tried to come to terms. He sent envoys to Antony, Caesar's representative in Belgium at that time, and suggested a compromise. If Caesar allowed him to live quietly in a prescribed region, he promised to give up all anti-Roman activities. All he asked was to be able to keep the vow he had made after Volusenus' unsuccessful attempts to kill him : never more to look upon a Roman. His request was granted. This agreement merely served him to gain time. He had entered into negotiations with some of his friends across the Channel. Judging that from henceforth it would be impossible to withstand Roman domination, and unable to resign himself to live in a country irrevocably plunged into slavery, he resolved to settle in Britain. After some hasty preparations for his departure, he set out with his companions. Caesar, who learnt of his plan at the last moment, tried to stop him. It was too late. Commius had escaped him by a last trick, as Frontinus has reported. After he had reached British soil he founded a kingdom which lasted for nearly a hundred years.



# APPENDICES

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

GLOSSARY

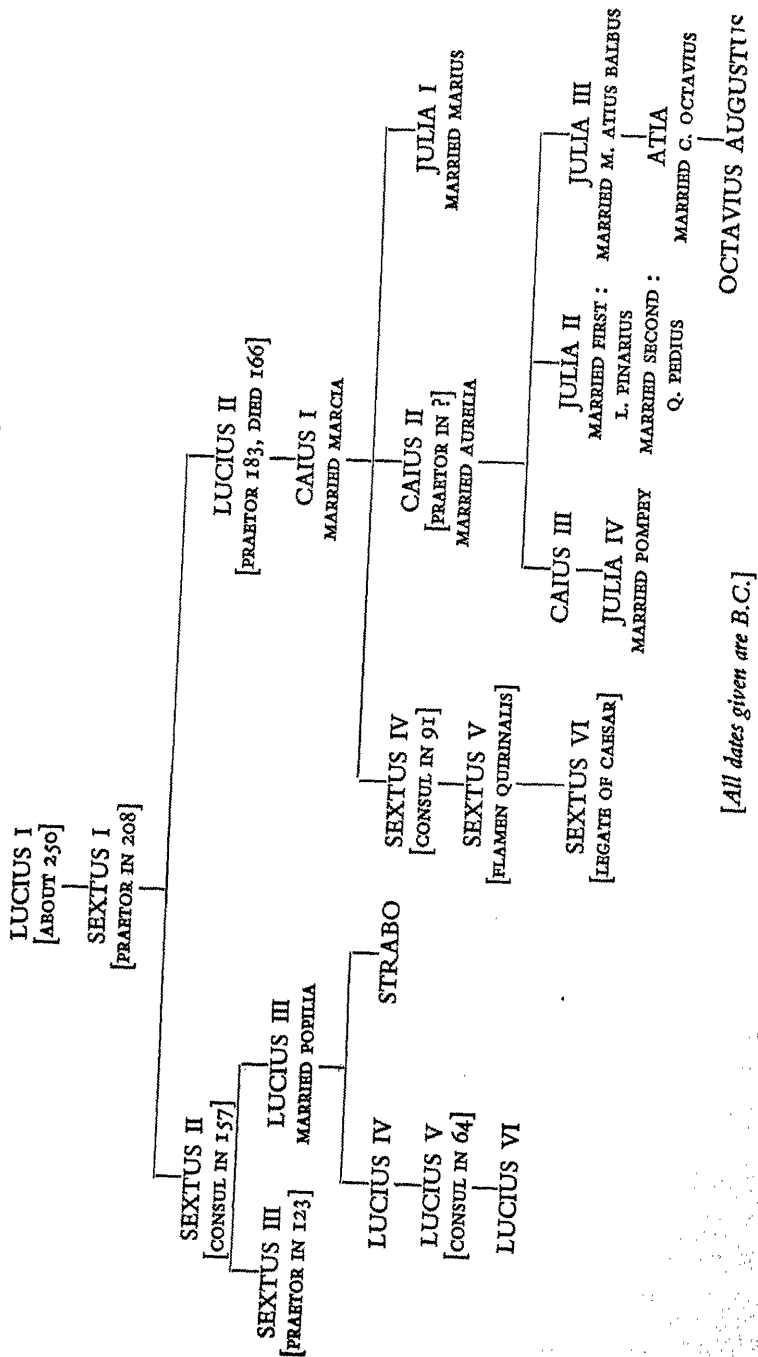
NOTES AND REFERENCES

*(translated by Roy Walker)*



# GENEALOGICAL TABLE

CONFIDENTIAL



[All dates given are B.C.]

## GLOSSARY

### AGER PUBLICUS

The 'public land', in other words the State's territory, was the result of Rome's military conquests. The property, whether public or private, of the defeated enemy was confiscated in accordance with the laws of war. It was thus that the *ager publicus* was gradually extended in the course of the wars which ended in Rome's seizure of Italy. After the campaign of Hannibal it spread still further as a result of the punishments inflicted upon those peoples who had voluntarily surrendered to the Carthaginians and, to use an expression which has been somewhat abused of late, agreed to 'collaborate' with them. This was specially the case with the cities of the Campagna and with the southern part of the peninsula. Rome's manner of dealing with those she had conquered varied according to the feelings with which they had managed to inspire her. There were peoples to whom, on payment of certain dues, she restored either the whole or a part of their land, but there were also cases to be found where the Romans not only seized the whole territory of the conquered country, but also transferred the entire population en bloc, reducing them to slavery. The number of 'displaced persons' cast adrift by the action of the Roman Senate and its generals was considerable. The confiscated territories were either delimited and cultivated or waste ground. The cultivated land was sold to private individuals or, more seldom, distributed gratuitously: in either case, it ceased to be *ager publicus* and became *ager privatus*. It was therefore the stretches of waste ground which constituted the *ager publicus*. These were divided into two groups: those not intended for cultivation and those suitable for such a purpose. To encourage the cultivation of the latter the State gave these lands over to private enterprise. Anyone could devote his energies to them. They were called *ager occupatorius*, which meant that they were available to the first comer, who was only required to make a very small payment. In practice it was the rich who benefited by them. Only they had enough capital to procure the man-power necessary for the heavy and costly work of cleaning these immense spaces. It thus ended by a minority of big capitalists rapidly taking possession of nearly the whole of the *ager publicus*. There was, indeed, a law fixing the maximum for individual ownership at five hundred plots (*jugera*), but it had fallen into disuse and no one gave it a thought. As a matter of fact, the occupier who had seized the land only held possession of it. The property still belonged to the State, and the rent which the latter collected continued to remind those who held the land of the fact. In reality, however, the rent was seldom claimed, and proceedings were scarcely ever taken against those who were behind-hand with it or for one reason or another failed to discharge their debt. So much was this the case that they ended by not paying at all, and, as the State continued to take no action, the man in possession had no

## GLOSSARY

further pangs of conscience and considered himself henceforward as the real owner of the land which belonged to the State.

### ARA

This was the name given to all altars, public and private. As soon as a family had a fixed dwelling it had an altar forming the hearth-stone. On this hearth, where the fire was perpetually burning, the first-fruits of the food were spread before every meal. Before drinking, a libation of wine had to be poured out upon it. Morning prayer was offered at this hearth and likewise the evening prayer of the assembled family.

### AS

A unit of money made of bronze. It weighed twelve ounces—the same weight as the Roman pound—and for that reason it was called the *as libralis* (from *libra*=pound). As a matter of fact none of the Roman asses weighed so much—they varied from nine to eleven ounces. According to Mommsen, this difference is accounted for by a wish to make the bronze correspond in weight with the money which was not yet struck officially but which was already in circulation in Rome, where it was bought in the same way as foreign money. It must be noted, however, that the public do not seem to have had great confidence in the exactitude of the weight guaranteed by the State and confirmed by a special mark on the *as libralis*. It was customary to weigh it in the presence of the parties concerned at the time of a transaction. It was a very cumbersome and inconvenient form of money when there was a question of any large payments. Those charged with paying the armies in a campaign were obliged to trail round with them numerous chariots loaded with asses (cf. Livy, IV, 60).

### ATRIUM

The living-room or common centre in every Roman house. Varron claims that the word is derived from Atria, a town in Tuscany where the first constructions of this kind were seen. It was in this room that the family dwelt, gathered round the hearth. The meal which they shared was prepared here, and here they offered sacrifice to the gods. The father of the family received his guests and his clients in this room, and in it was the chest in which he kept his money. Here the mother worked surrounded by her daughters and maid-servants. It was here that the nuptial bed was set up for the wedding night.

### CAPITOL

This name was given to the enclosure surrounding the temple of Jupiter, protector of the city of Rome. Tradition attributes the origin of the name to the discovery during the digging of the foundations of a man's head still intact. More prosaic minds trace its derivation to the word *caput* because the hill thus consecrated was considered as a head commanding the city. The temple, of which traces were discovered in 1865, was dedicated by the elder

## GLOSSARY

Tarquinius ; the construction was begun and went forward under Tarquinius Superbus. It was finished immediately after the expulsion of the latter. The building rose from a high stylobate and formed a more or less regular square. After standing for four centuries, the temple was burnt by an unknown hand. Sulla set out to rebuild it, but he died soon afterwards. Q. Lutatius Catulus was chosen to superintend the completion of this work (cf. Chapter 15, Part I).

CENSUS. See Introduction, pages xiii-xiv.

### CENTURY

Division of categories. See Introduction, page xiii.

### CLASSES AND CATEGORIES

Patricians, clientes, plebs, proletarii, capite censi. See Introduction, pages xi-xiv.

### COGNOMEN

Roman citizens had three kinds of name : (1) the *praenomen* (first name) ; (2) the *nomen gentile* (name of the gens or family) ; (3) the *cognomen* (surname). Thus in the designation Caius Julius Caesar, Caius is the first name, Julius the family name and Caesar the surname. The *praenomen* was the individual name given to a son nine days after his birth. It was officially recorded at his clothing with the toga of manhood when the adolescent was inscribed in the lists of citizens (cf. Chapter I, Part I). Here is a list of the *praenomina* in use among the Romans at the time of Caesar (a certain number of these names, perhaps twenty, had disappeared at the time of Sulla). They are followed by the usual abbreviations (the Romans generally merely put the first or first few letters) : Appius (Ap.), Aulus (A.), Decimus (D.), Gaius (C.), Gnaeus (Cn.), Kaeso (K.), Lucius (L.), Mamercus (Mam.), Manius (M.), Marcus (M.), Numerius (N.), Publius (P.), Quintus (Q.), Servius (Ser.), Sextus (Sex.), Spurius (Sp.), Tiberius (Ti.), Titus (T.) \* They were inspired either by local associations or by some term suggesting happy ideas. Thus Caesar's *praenomen*, which in Latin was written Gaius (with a G), was derived from the verb *gaudere* and conveyed an idea of prosperity and well-being. Patrician families generally selected a certain number of names which they preferred for their own use. The Julii had fixed their choice on those of Gaius, Lucius, Sextus, and Vopiscus. (They stopped using the last name at the period of Sulla, and in Caesar's time we only come across the first three names in this *gens*.) The *nomen gentile* belonged to all the members of the *gens* and to all who became attached to it for any reason : wives, clients, freed slaves. Most of these names appear to be adjectives derived from former *praenomina*. Thus Julius (an old *praenomen* which had fallen into disuse at

\* From the time of Sulla the following names appear but not very often as yet Agrippa, Cossus, Drusus, Faustus, and Paullus.

the beginning of the Republic) gave Julius, Claudus produced Claudius, etc. Often, also, they were taken from the names of places, and thus serve to indicate the original source from which the family sprang. As for the *cognomen*, it originated in a nickname given by friends or by the people. From the time of the Second Punic War, it was taken into consideration and appeared in official documents. From an individual name it became general and was attached to a whole branch of the *gens*. For many people this meant the creation of a second *cognomen*. Thus in the *gens* Cornelia we find the formation of the branch of Scipios, of which certain members received an individual surname which became their second *cognomen*. This was the case with the son-in-law of Scipio Africanus who made himself well known through his systematic opposition to Cato (cf. Part V of my book, *La Destruction de Carthage*) and who was called Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica. He in turn founded a tributary branch which was distinguished by a third *cognomen*. It is represented in history by P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Corculum. The *cognomen* was most frequently taken from some distinctive characteristic, either physical or moral: Crassus (fat), Cato (cunning), Lepidus (agreeable). It often owed its origin to an historical exploit, either authentic or legendary. The *cognomen* of Caesar is a notable example of this (cf. Chapter I, Part I). The Punic wars introduced the use of the geographical *cognomen* accorded as a mark of national gratitude to a victorious general.

A few words, in conclusion, on feminine names—in theory, women had no *praenomen*. They were only called by the name of the *gens* to which they belonged. In ancient times they were given a sort of *cognomen* which was usually a masculine *praenomen* in a feminized form. This practice disappeared, however, towards the middle of the Republic. After that, in order to distinguish them it became customary to add to the name of the *gens* the father's *cognomen* in the genitive case.

## COLONY

Originally this was a group of Roman citizens sent to occupy a conquered town or to found a new one on a domain belonging to the State. Legend attributed this system to Romulus. In point of fact it was common to all the Italic peoples. It figured in their ancient traditions, and it must have been from them that the Romans borrowed it. A *senatus consult* laid down the basic organization of a colony, the number of colonists to be sent, the area of the territory assigned to the whole colony, that of the individual plots to be allotted to each colonist and the number of the 'curators' whose business it was to superintend the formation of the new city. In creating a colony the Roman State's first object was to make its rule in the district secure. Other reasons were added to this. It was a means of spreading the Roman race in Italy and so served to intensify recruiting for the army. Later it was also used as a method of removing from Rome turbulent individuals considered to be undesirable, of easing the congestion in the over-populated capital, and of removing from it those who were needy or unemployed. The number of colonists had originally been fixed at three hundred families. Each *gens*

supplied one. After the Second Punic War the number rose considerably : to 1000, 2000, and even 3000. When the number of volunteers proved insufficient, recruiting was introduced as for the army, for to be sent in a colony was comparable to military service, of which the burden rested upon all citizens eligible for bearing arms. After the dissolution of the old Latin confederation Rome devised the plan of creating, in addition to Roman colonies properly so called (that is to say, composed of Roman citizens), what were known as Latin colonies—recruiting these among their Latin allies. Officially this was intended as a reward for their courage and fidelity, but in reality it was a method of creating colonies in distant countries where the Romans did not want to go, and where the climate or the geographical situation was not to their liking. The new town thus created passed as a little State, united to Rome by the bonds of an 'alliance', but these bonds were actually those of a strict dependence. Furthermore, there were two special categories of colonies : agrarian colonies, which were intended to remedy the serious social troubles of the second century B.C. (these formed the basis of the social policy of the Gracchi), and military colonies whose purpose was to reward the soldiers. These were founded by a general on his own authority and independently of any intervention by the Senate, and they were not organized by civil commissioners but by military chiefs.

CONSUL. See Introduction, page xvi.

#### CORONA CIVICA

This was the second in order of importance of the crowns granted as military rewards. The first was a simple crown of grass. It could only be accorded to one who had saved an army in peril or a besieged town. As for the civic crown, made from the leaves of an oak (the sacred tree of Jupiter), it was conferred upon whoever had by his own hand rescued a Roman citizen from the enemy (cf. Chapter 3, Part I). Coriolanus was one of the first to gain the honour. When the crowned hero went to the circus or the theatre, all the audience, even senators, near whom he was to sit were obliged to stand up as he approached. There was also the *corona muralis*, granted to the warrior who was the first to scale the walls of a fortress, and the *corona castrensis* given to the first who penetrated into the enemy camp. Lastly, there was the *corona navalis* which rewarded the first soldier to jump aboard an enemy galley.

All these crowns come under the heading of *dona militaria* (military awards) granted by a general to his subordinates. They must be distinguished from the laurel *corona triumphalis* of a general whom the Senate honoured with a triumph, and the *corona ovalis* or myrtle crown of a general to whom, though it judged him unworthy of a triumph, it granted an *ovatio*. These crowns were awarded by the Senate to a victor as a mark of national gratitude.

CURIA. See Introduction, page x.

## EAGLE

The standard of the legion. It was Marius who first granted this symbol, which immediately became the object of a sort of religious cult. It consisted of a spread eagle gripping a thunderbolt in its talons. The eagle was silver, the thunderbolt gold. Under the Empire the eagle itself was gilded. The silver and gold were applied to bronze. The pole, which was sometimes covered with silver, had a strong point with a notch to fix it so that it could be stuck firmly into the ground, and, almost half-way up, it had a hook which made it possible to draw it out. The eagle was defended in battle by the *antesignani*, and in the camp it was placed in a small chapel near the enclosure of the praetorium.

## FORUM

After fighting a series of battles (eventually brought to an end by the intervention of the Sabines) Romulus and Tatius concluded a treaty on the very place where their armies had been fighting. Thereafter this place bore the name of *comitium* from the verb *coire* (to unite). It was afterwards to become the meeting-place of the *comitia*. The *comitium* was situated beside a wooded and marshy valley. The woods were cleared and a road constructed across the marsh, joining the lowest slopes of the Capitol to the Velia, a place on higher ground forming part of the Palatine. The two towns were thus united by a straight road. This was the origin of the *Via Sacra*, or Holy Street. It was on the *comitium* that Tullus Hostilius, the second successor of Romulus, built the senatorial palace which was called the *Curia Hostilia* in his memory. By constructing the *cloaca maxima* the Tarquins drained the land cleared by Romulus and Tatius, thus making it larger and giving it a regular shape. The small tribes of the surrounding country had become accustomed to use it for their market. Thus the *forum* came into being. This is the legendary version. We gather from it that originally the *forum* was only a market or fairground shared by the varied population occupying the neighbouring hills. It was probably contemporary with the *comitium*. Perhaps it may even have been anterior to it. The *forum* and the *comitium* were absolutely distinct. The *comitium* was the seat of the senate, there the assembly of the *curies*, a patrician institution, was held. It was the aristocratic citadel. The *forum* was the meeting-place of the popular assemblies. The tribunal was erected on the boundary of the *forum* and the *comitium*. The tribunes who occupied it spoke facing the *comitium*. Caius Gracchus was the first to speak facing the *forum*. It was in the *forum* that the magistrates made their announcements to the people. There the generals gave an account of their campaigns. The great political trials were held there and the condemned executed. There, religious ceremonies were celebrated. Triumphal processions went along the *Via Sacra*, which passed right through the *forum* from end to end. Its shops, at first very modest and rudimentary, became more and more luxurious. The bankers and money-changers established themselves there. This attracted a whole swarm of jobbers and speculators. The tribunals drew together a crowd of litigants and barristers. The auctions were the joy of innumerable

loiterers. Everything there contributed to the atmosphere of ceaseless noise and movement which continued from the first hour of morning till far into the night. Finally, it is to be noted that the *forum* formed a rectangle. From the wall supporting the rostra at the very boundary of the *comitium* to the *Regia*, where lived the *pontifex maximus*, it measured 175 yards. Its maximum width was 51 yards and its minimum width  $37\frac{1}{2}$  yards.

GENS. See Introduction, pages x-xi.

#### THE GOOD GODDESS (*Bona Dea*)

The surname of a goddess of fecundity whose name was not divulged, and whom the Romans invoked in order that she should make the land fruitful and give the women children. She had her temple in Rome, on the Aventine, but her feast was celebrated in the house of the consul or the praetor, because it was supposed to be for the whole Roman people. Cicero traces this feast back to the time of the kings and says that no sacrifice was of a more ancient institution or surrounded with stranger ceremonies. It began with an expiatory sacrifice consisting of a young sow and wine. This was a more or less discreet allusion to a somewhat unpleasant adventure which popular mythology attributed to this divinity. Her father, the god Faunus, having given her wine in abundance so that she was drunk, was able to violate her. It was therefore a more than sufficient excuse for the noble ladies who were present at the feast to indulge in very copious libations.

#### KINGS

Election of—*interrex*, *rex sacrosanctus*. See Introduction, pages x-xi, xv.

#### KNIGHTS (*Equites*)

This was the name given by the Romans to all those citizens who, being inscribed in the first category of the census (see Introduction) were eligible for mounted service in the legion. It was from this class of rich merchants, financiers, and big capitalists that the *publicani*, that is to say, the adjudicators of the public services, were recruited. (France under the old régime knew their equivalent in the *fermiers généraux* whom the Revolution sent to the scaffold.) As a result the two terms, *publicans* and *knight*, came to be synonymous. Thus a powerful financial oligarchy was formed which controlled the fortunes of the Republic in a hidden but most effective manner. To embark upon the great enterprises which they undertook (public works, transport, military equipment, tax gathering, development of mines, etc.) needed capital beyond the means of even the highest individual fortunes. They thus came to form financial companies with a certain number of associates (*socii*) who pooled their capital and elected a kind of delegated administrator (*magister*). The *socii* were known by name and were held personally responsible for the efficient running of the enterprise. As these undertakings went on developing, however, it was often necessary to augment the capital by



calling upon *participes*, who remained anonymous, only sharing in the profit of the business and running no risk beyond the loss of the money which they had entrusted to the company. They could either be holders of complete shares (*partes*) or they could form a group, dividing the share between them (*particulae*), each holding a fifth, a tenth, etc. As a result the companies had members in every class of society, from the eminent consular personages who saw them as a means of fructifying their fortunes, to the humblest citizen who found in them the best investment for his small savings. As the field of activity of each of these large companies was strictly delimited, there was no competition between them. Numerous capitalists had interests in several at the same time. Far from opposing each other, they showed themselves to be solidary, supported each other mutually, and formed veritable trusts which dictated their wishes to the State.

### LEGION

The legion, which according to Plutarch was first instituted by Romulus, was radically transformed and amplified by Servius Tullius. According to Livy the legion of Servius was divided into three sections arranged in the following order : (1) citizens of the first class with complete armour : helmet, cuirass, greaves, and a round metal shield (*clipeus*) ; (2) citizens of the second class without a cuirass and with a square wooden shield covered with leather (*scutum*) ; (3) citizens of the third class armed like the former but without greaves. The legionaries were thus distinguished by the quality and abundance of their armour. The military reform which was attributed to Camillus, but which historians generally place between his death and the war of Pyrrhus, led to a completely different conception. Thereafter the soldiers' rank depended on their age. Youths (*hastati*) were put into the front line, grown men (*principes*) in the second line, the more elderly (*triarii*) in the third. A shock battalion (*velites*), whose place was in the advanced guard, would be composed of the youngest and (which is significant) the poorest of the legionaries. The legion was divided into thirty companies (*manipuli*). A *manipulus* was divided into two equal parts (*centuria*), each commanded by a centurion. The one who was in command of the right-hand half (*centurio prior*) was the leader of the whole *manipulus* and had under his orders the centurion of the left-hand half (*centurio posterior*). The *manipuli* of the two first categories (the *hastati* and the *principes*) numbered a hundred and twenty men, those of the third category (the *triarii*) only had sixty. A certain number of men were taken from each century to form the battalion of the *velites*. As for the total strength of the legion, it varied from three thousand men at the beginning to about five thousand. Then came Marius to change the military organization of the Romans once more, and this time from top to bottom. In calling upon the poor and the *proletarii* to form part of the army he was abolishing all the old distinctions of class and fortune. Those based on age likewise disappeared. Gone were *hastati*, *principes*, and *triarii*. There were to be only distinctions of honour which would serve to differentiate between the centurions of various grades. Gone were the poor *velites*, those

endless sacrifices thrown as fodder to the enemy. Henceforward all the legionaries were armed in the same way with arms of the same kind. A less rigid method of internal organization made the legion easier to manage. It was divided into ten cohorts of which the numbers varied in proportion to the strength of the legion. There were still *manipuli*, but they were consolidated into little groups of three within each cohort. The cohort was placed under the command of the first of the six group centurions. It was at this period that the eagle of the legion first appeared (see note on 'Eagle' above). This reform which filled the army with impecunious soldiers, ready for anything to gain their pay, and attracted by the thought of the large booty to be taken from the enemy, had the most serious consequences and strongly marked the course of Roman history. For the moment, suffice it to say that only the new democratic army created by 'Uncle Marius' enabled his nephew to carry out his great design.

### LICTORS

Lesser officials, put at the disposal of the principal Roman magistrates to see that their orders were carried out. Originally they were the attendants of the kings, but under the Republic they continued to be employed in the service of the consuls. They wore the same costume as the magistrate they accompanied: the toga when in Rome, the red military uniform when with the army on a campaign. Their principal emblem, the *fascies*, consisted of an axe together with some switches or rods (the instruments of execution and corporal punishment) bound together by a red strap. The lictors held the *fascies* with their left hands, resting them on their left shoulders. They walked in single file before the magistrate. The one who immediately preceded him was the *lictor proximus* or *primus*, and he was higher in rank than the others. Under the Republic their number was originally twelve. Sulla, on becoming dictator, allowed himself twenty-four. Caesar gained seventy-two from the Senate for the day of his triumph. The *magister equitum* had six. A praetor had to be content with only two lictors in Rome, but he was given six when he went to carry out his duties in a province.

### PONTIFFS

According to Cicero, Numa created five pontiffs, who with himself as president formed a college of six members. The Lex Ogulnia (300 B.C.) increased this number to nine: four patricians and five plebeians. Sulla fixed the number of pontiffs at fifteen, not counting the scribes and secretaries, who could replace the pontiffs under certain circumstances and who were given the title of *pontifices minores* (see Chapter 6, Part I). The college of pontiffs had control over those whose office it was to carry out the public ceremonies of religion: the *flamines* and the *vestales* came under the direct authority of the *pontifex maximus*. The latter concentrated in his hands all the powers of pontifical competency. His colleagues formed his council. He was not supposed to decide questions concerning religious practice without consulting them, but he had sole authority over the sacerdotal staff whom the

college controlled. The first plebeian *pontifex maximus* was Ti. Coruncanius in 253 B.C. It is to be noticed that the pontiffs were not priests in the ordinary sense of the word. They were theological specialists, whose office it was to keep watch over the strict application of the rules of the sacred law. They were, however, supposed to possess priestly powers, and were qualified to replace the *flamines* should occasion arise.

#### PRAETORIUM

Headquarters of the commander-in-chief of a Roman army. It was at the centre of the camp and was a reserved space in the middle of which the general established his tent. As at the early period when this custom was introduced the military chief did not yet bear the title of *consul* but of *praetor*, the part of the camp belonging to him received the name of *praetorium* which it always kept. Opposite the entrance to the *praetorium* an altar was set up on which the general offered sacrifices. On the right was the *auguratorium* where he took the auguries, on the left the tribunal where he and his officers administered justice. A small chapel within the enclosure of the *praetorium* served as a place where the eagles of the legions under the general's orders could be deposited.

SENATE. See Introduction, page xi.

#### TOGA

This was the national costume of Romans. Foreigners and exiles were not allowed to wear it. Exceptions to the rule were made, however—notably in the case of some of the Cisalpine and Transalpine Gauls before they were granted citizenship. Originally the toga was a piece of material of moderate dimensions. Women wore it as well as men. It also served as a blanket. Gradually, however, its form became more complicated. Women gave it up and replaced it by the *stola*, an ample garment, joined with seams, held in at the waist by a girdle and sometimes leaving the arms bare. Soldiers adopted the *sagum*, a sort of shirt which came half-way down the thigh and left full liberty of movement. The toga became the symbol of civilian professions, the badge of a citizen. This garment was expensive. It could be laid aside at home or in the country, but in Rome itself it was unseemly to go out without putting it on. It was made of wool. In summer a thin material was used, exaggeratedly fine and transparent in the case of dandies. It was white. That was the great luxury. Chalk was used to make the white still whiter. This was specially the case with candidates canvassing for an office, who used to walk about the forum soliciting votes in *toga candida*, hence the term by which they were ever afterwards to be known. The toga could have a variety of trimmings. That of the *toga praetexta* consisted of a woven border (*prae texta*) of purple wool. It was worn by children (cf. Chapter I, Part I), by high magistrates, by certain priests, notably the *flamen Dialis* (cf. Chapter 2, Part I), and by the pontiffs. It was occasionally granted as a special reward to a military man. The wearing of the toga was in itself

a most complicated art. There has been much discussion as to how the Romans actually put it on. It would take too long to enter into details on this subject, but to keep to essentials, they held this semi-circular piece of stuff (measuring about 5 yards 10 inches by 2 yards 6 inches) in both hands by the straight side, about a third of the way along. They gathered it into a bundle of pleats, which they placed on the left shoulder. One end of the toga, left free in the front, covered the left arm and fell right down to the feet. Then they placed the edge of the material on the other shoulder, and the back was covered. To bring the toga forward they gathered the material together under the right arm. They made another bundle of pleats which they brought obliquely across the chest and which they threw over the left shoulder. After this it only remained to arrange the famous half-circle of carefully pleated folds, and to flatten the wide pleat across the chest by making it straight and even. Of course this masterly architecture could not be achieved by everybody. Slaves, specialists in the art, practised on models and succeeded in acquiring a regular virtuosity in it. They kept the pleats in shape and prepared them overnight by pressing them with pincers. It was, indeed, the arrangement and fineness of the pleating which was specially appreciated by the elegant, and it appears that Caesar was as unrivalled in this domain as he was in others.

#### TUNIC

The toga was originally worn next the skin. Men had nothing underneath except for a sort of loincloth round the waist. The tunic first appeared in popular circles. It was, indeed, to remain as the only garment which characterized the people. The tunic which the patricians began to wear looked rather like a short-sleeved shirt with no fullness and was held in place by a belt. The *tunica laticlavia* was looser and longer. In Caesar's time a tunic falling to the ankles (*talaris*) was becoming known. He himself set the fashion for tunics with long fringed sleeves which caused a scandal (cf. Suet., *Caesar*, 45).

# NOTES AND REFERENCES

## PART ONE

### ENTRANCE UPON THE STAGE OF HISTORY

#### I The Child Becomes a Man

*Sources :* SUETONIUS, 88 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 69 ; APPIAN, II, 149 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 41, 2 ; EUTROPIUS, VI, 19.

*For reference :* for this chapter, and similarly for the following chapters, the synoptic tables given by H. Strassburger in his book *Caesars Eintritt in die Geschichte* (Munich, 1938), cited for the inestimable services it renders to historians ; they follow Caesar from his birth up to the formation of the first triumvirate. A general survey of the period is to be found in Schuz, *Das Zeitalter des Marius und Sulla* (Klio, Part 46, 1942).

1. The date of the 15th of March 84 presumes that the birth of Caesar took place in the year 100 B.C., a date which incidentally results from a reading of the early texts, provided that they are taken at their face value, without attempting to apply to them what is known as the intuitive method of research, of which scholarly criticism takes rather too much advantage. That is what certain modern historians have endeavoured to do. This explains the controversy, nearly a century old, which was started by Mommsen in volume III of his *Römische Geschichte*, in which he categorically declared himself in favour of the year 102. Zumpt in 1874 energetically defended the original date. Deutsch in 1914 endorsed his view. But shortly afterwards (in 1917) Rice Holmes gave his adherence to the date proposed by Mommsen. In 1934 De Sanctis interposed the weight of his authority, which remains high, to insist upon upholding the traditional date ; and almost at the same time, J. Carcopino, throwing into the scales a line of argument at once adroit and ingenious (without being completely convincing), put forward a medial date ; neither 100, nor 102, but 101. . . . For the present, that is where the matter rests. Cf. *infra* the bibliographic account under the heading *Caesar's Birth*.—For the genealogy of Caesar's family, cf. Suetonius, 46.

2. For the *praenomina* in use among the Julii, cf. Münzer in *Pauly-Wissowa*, vol. X, col. 106-107 and 464-465. For the origins and ramifications of the gens Julia, cf. Glandorp, *Notitia familiae Caii Julii Caesaris dictatoris et Caii Caesaris Octaviani Augusti* (Paris, 1632), the account of Groebe, *Zur Stammtafel der Julii Iulii in Geschichte Roms*, by Drumann-Groebe, vol. III, pp. 639-694 ; and the article by Berry, *Biographies des familles consulaires romaines : famille Julia*, which appeared in *l'Investigateur* of January 1, 1866 (special printing in the Bibl. Nat., section : J. 23251). The genealogical table included at the end of the present work will enable the reader to find his bearings.—The word *Julius* comprises 599 articles in *Pauly-Wissowa* (vol. X, col. 107-952). Articles

140, 147, 28, 148, 149, 127, 150, 141, 129, 142, 135, 151, 130, 143, 152, 131, 144, 153, in their chronological order, are worth retaining.

3. According to Macrobius, *Sat.* I, 12, 34, the birth of Caesar occurred on the 12th. But a passage in Dion Cassius (XLVII, 18, 6) enabled Zumpt (*op. cit.*) to rectify the date by assigning it to the following day, the 13th. I have followed his reading. Regarding the month which used to be called *Quintilis*, and which was subsequently renamed July in honour of Caesar, there is no dispute. Cf. Plutarch, *Num.*, 19; Appian, II, 106 and V, 97; Dion Cassius, XLIV, 5, 2; Cicero, *ad Att.*, XVI, I, 1 and 4, 1; Suetonius, 76; Florus, II, 13; Censorinus, *de die nat.*, 22, 16; Festus Avienus, v. *Jul.*

4. Sextus VI, *amicus et necessarius*; cf. *Bell. Alex.*, 61, 1.

5. The Consul Lucius. A law is known to have been proposed by him dating from the end of the year 90 (*lex Julia*) which conferred the right of the city upon the allied towns of Italy which had remained loyal up to that time. Cf. Appian, I, 49; Cicero, *pro Balbo*, VIII, 21.

6. Plutarch tells us: 'He had a fine, white skin and was slightly built' (18). The sketch given by Suetonius in his para. 45 allows us to catch a glimpse of the youthful Caesar. Cf. the precise and meticulous commentary by Deutsch, *Concerning Caesar's Appearance*, in *Class. Journ.*, vol. XII, pp. 247-253, and *infra*, the section *Iconography* in the bibliographical summary.

7. The *toga praetexta* had a band of purple around its border like the one worn by the magistrates. The Romans of that period wished to signify in this way that children should be held in no less regard, as to their person, than the highest magistrates of the Republic.—The *bullula* was a capsule-shaped jewel formed by two medallions, usually circular, placed one over the other and provided with a ring through which passed the cord which enabled it to hang from the boy's neck. Cf. Yates, *Additional Observations on the Bullula worn by Roman Boys* (Bibl. Nat., section 8<sup>o</sup>J, item 639).

8. For the *deductio in forum* and the description of the Roman scene upon this celebration of the *liberalia*, cf. Varro, VI, 14 and Ovid, *Fast.*, III, 726 and 761. Cicero notes that the practice of providing a numerous following for this event was carefully observed (*Pro Mur.*, 23).

9. Caesar's custom of wearing his belt loosely tied is avouched by the majority of ancient authors. Cf. notably Dion Cassius, XLIII, 43, 3: 'He liked at all times to wear his toga in a flowing manner' (symptom of effeminate manners among the Romans), and the celebrated reply of Sulla which is discussed in Chapter III of this book.

## 2 Getting under Way

Sources: SUETONIUS, 1; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 5; *comp. Alex.-Caes.*, 3.

For reference: Bennett, *Cinna and his Times* (Menasha, 1923).

10. It appears from a passage in Tacitus (*Dial.*, 28) that Aurelia concerned herself personally and actively with her son's education. Cf. the article in Deutsch, *The Women of Caesar's Family*, in *Class. Journ.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 502-514.

11. There are certain biographical details about Caesar's tutor to be found in Suetonius (*Gram.*, VII). 'He is reputed to have had an all-encompassing mind,' writes that author, 'an amazing memory and a vast learning in Greek and Latin literature. With this knowledge he combined a mild and easy temper and a disinterestedness which, inasmuch as it caused him to disdain a salary, procured him rewards so much the greater from the generosity of his pupils. First he taught in the household of the boy Julius Caesar, afterwards in Caesar's own. . . . It is said that famous men would attend his school, among whom was Cicero, even during his praetorship.' Cf. Macrobius, *Sat.*, III, 12—For Livius Andronicus, cf. H. de la Ville de Mirmont, *Etudes sur l'ancienne poésie latine: Livius Andronicus*.

12. Cossutia. Another controversy: was she Caesar's fiancée or his first wife? Suetonius (I) confines himself to stating that Caesar had been betrothed to her while he still wore the *praetexta*. Not a word, not the least allusion to his marriage. But Deutsch, summoning to his aid a passage from Plutarch (5: 'Upon his return from the quaestorship [Caesar] married Pompeia, his third wife') makes Cossutia the first wife of Caesar, and in consequence the daughter of Cinna becomes the second (cf. his article, *Caesar's First Wife*, in *Class. Philol.*, 1917, pp. 93-96). Drumann, about a century earlier, had put forward the same hypothesis. His learned successor, Groebe, some fifty years later refused to subscribe to this, explaining his reasons in a highly pertinent note to which I refer the reader (*op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 681, n. 3). For my own part, I consider that Deutsch has assigned too restricted a meaning to the term *dimittere* which Suetonius uses. It certainly means *to repudiate*, but also *to dismiss, to send away, to abandon*, and, so read, nothing stands in the way of its use in connection with a fiancée. In case of a divorce, the Romans would just as often use the expression *divortium facere*, which does not lend itself to any ambiguity, and Suetonius himself resorts to it in the same Chapter 62 of his *Augustus*, in which Deutsch has certainly found a *dimisit* which he needed to support his theory, while passing over the *divortium fecit* which somewhat weakens it. I think that Plutarch must have made a mistake in making Pompeia the third wife of Caesar, just as he made a mistake in describing him as an aspirant for the flamine during Sulla's dictatorship, when all the evidence agrees in placing his nomination in Cinna's period.

13. Caesar's father. The mention of his death is made by Pliny, VII, 181. Latterly an inscription constituting his eulogy has been unearthed. This passage scarcely sheds any fresh light upon him. Cf. T. Frank, *The new eulogium of Julius Caesar's Father* (*Amer. Journ. of Philol.*, vol. LVIII, p. 90).—According to Suetonius (I), Caesar 'was in his sixteenth year when he lost his father'.

14. Drumann puts the marriage of Caesar in 83 (*op. cit.*, p. 128). Groebe prefers 84 (*id.*).

15. For his nomination to the flamine, cf. Suetonius, I; Velleius Paterculus, II, 43, 1; Plutarch, *Caes.*, I (inexact). The *flamines* (from the verb *flare*: the flamen is he who lights and kindles the flame) were sacrificial priests, each assigned to the worship of one particular god. Originally they

were fifteen in number : three *maiores*—the flamen Dialis, Martialis, Quirinalis, who sat in the College of Pontiffs (with the right to vote)—and twelve *minores*, offices which eventually fell into neglect, together with the gods at whose shrines they officiated.

16. We read in Livy (XXVII, 8) : 'The idle and dissolute youth of C. Flaccus, his vices which rendered him odious . . . to his entire family, had decided the Supreme Pontiff, P. Licinius, to choose him for flamen.' That occurred in 209 B.C.

### 3 First Trials

Sources : SUETONIUS, I, 2, 49, 74 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, I ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 41, 2 ; DION CASSIUS, XLIII, 20, 2 and 43, 3-4 ; [AUR. VICT.] *de vir. ill.*, 78, I.

For reference : The essay of Schuz mentioned *supra*, Carcopino, *Sulla ou la monarchie manquée* (Paris, 1931), Lanzani, *L. Cornelio Sulla dittatore* (Milan, 1936).

17. In obedience to Sulla's wishes M. Piso had renounced Annia, the widow of Cinna ; and Pompey his first wife Antistia. According to Suetonius it was Caesar's refusal which provoked Sulla to retaliate. Plutarch states the case altogether differently : 'When the proscriptions began, Sulla refrained from attacking Caesar, but instead of retiring, Caesar entered the lists for the priestly office and presented himself as a candidate in the public eye, in spite of the fact that he was still an unfledged youth. Sulla was opposed to this and cancelled his nomination, even wishing to put him to death.' Hence, according to Plutarch's authority, it was the impolitic ambition of Caesar which had aroused the wrath of the dictator. As I have pointed out above, this version is contradicted by documents which are perfectly credible. Cf. Velleius Paterculus, II, 43, I.

18. According to Macrobius (II, 3, 9) it is Pompey to whom Sulla had addressed his prophetic 'warning' about Caesar.

19. Cf. Carcopino in *Histoire Romaine* (coll. Glotz), vol. II, 1st part, p. 423. J. Carcopino writes, repeating the error of Drumann-Groebe (*op. cit.*, p. 128) : Nicomedes III. This is inaccurate. Nicomedes III died in 94 B.C. Nicomedes IV succeeded him. Caesar's 'mission' in Bithynia must be placed after 84 B.C. At the time of Nicomedes III's death Caesar was only six. Cf. the note of Fr. Geyer in *Pauly-Wissowa*, vol. XVII, col. 497-499.

20. For the siege of Mitylene by Min. Thermus, cf. Plutarch, *Lucull.*, 4.

21. Plutarch, who is badly informed about this period of Caesar's life, claims that upon leaving Italy to seek refuge from Sulla's persecutions, he repaired immediately to the court of Nicomedes IV in Bithynia.

22. Speaking of the relations which existed between Caesar and Nicomedes IV, Suetonius (49) quotes the 'well-known' lines of Licinius Calvus :

Everything that Bithynia  
And Caesar's lover ever owned.



23. For M. Fulvius Nobilior, 'the distributor of civic crowns', cf. Aulus Gellius, V, 6.

24. For the expedition of P. Servilius Isauricus, cf. Ormerod, *The Campaign of Servilius Isauricus against the Pirates*, in *Journ. of Rom. st.*, 1922, vol. XII, pp. 35-36 and 288.

#### 4 A Stay in Rome

Sources : SUETONIUS, 3, 4, 55; CICERO, *Brut.* (following Suet., 55); PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 3, 5; [AUR. VICT.] *de vir. ill.*, 78, 2-3; VALERIUS MAXIMUS, VIII, 9, 3; TACITUS, *Dial.*, 34 (inaccurate mention of Caesar's age); VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 43; QUINTILIAN, X, 1, 114.

25. Cf. Carcopino, *op. cit.*, 2nd part, pp. 530-531 (n. 10).

26. Cf. Carcopino, *id.*, pp. 533-534.

27. Cf. Hardy, *The Number of the Sullan Senate* (*Journ. of Rom. St.*, 1916, vol. VI, pp. 59-62).

28. The 'triumph' of Dolabella took place in 78. Cf. on the subject of Dolabella in this connection, Plutarch, *Sull.*, 28, 29 and *comp.* 2.

29. For these friendly prosecutors, cf. Boissière, *l'Accusation publique et les délations chez les Romains* (Niort, 1911).

30. Thus Suetonius (55): 'During his youth he seems to have adopted the oratorical style of Caesar Strabo and in his *Divinatio* even copied word for word some passages borrowed from a speech of that orator, entitled *On behalf of the Sardinians*.'

31. Epithets which were conferred upon Caesar by Dolabella: 'The rival [fem.] of the queen', 'the bottom half of the royal bed' (*vid. Suet.* 49). C. Scribonius Curio, consul in 77, whose son became one of Caesar's most active collaborators, called him 'Nicomedes' bride' and 'the brothel of Bithynia' (*id.*).

32. We read in Suetonius (50): 'He seduced a large number of high-born women, among others Postumia, the wife of Servius Sulpicius [probably the consul of 51, cf. *infra*, Index, under this name], Lollia, wife of Aulus Gabinius, Tertulla, wife of Marcus Crassus, and even Cn. Pompey's wife, Mucia.' C. Scribonius Curio the elder, mentioned in the preceding note, describes Caesar as 'every woman's husband and every man's wife' (Suet., 52).

33. The territory of Miletus includes that of Myontes and all the coastal region which stretches from Myontes on the north to the gulf which washes the near-island of Didymene on the south. This part of the coast is served by six ports. At an easy distance of these ports an outer bastion of small islands forms a line of defence, among which, to the south, lies Pharmacusa.

34. According to Suetonius (49), Caesar reminded the Senate that he was obligated to Nicomedes IV 'for numerous favours'. This, according to the same author, occasioned Cicero's reply: 'Let us pass over that, I entreat you, as there is no one who is not aware of what he gave you and what he received at your hands.'

5 *The Adventure*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 4, 74 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, I ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 41, 3-42 ; VALERIUS MAXIMUS, VI, 9, 15 ; POLYAENUS, VII, 23, 1.

35. Suetonius devotes only a few lines to the episode.

36. Valerius Maximus records only the figure of fifty talents.

37. The reference is to M. Juncus Silanus (for the spelling of his name *Juncus*, and not Junius, cf. Nipperdey, in *Philol.*, 1851, vol. VI, p. 377), governor of the province of Asia, invested with proconsular powers in 75-74. His predecessor in 76-75 was named M. Junius Silanus.

38. The fragment of Caesar's speech has been preserved by Aulus Gellius, V, 13, but this author has erroneously placed it in the period at which Caesar was discharging the duties of Supreme Pontiff.

6 *From the College of Pontiffs to the Tribune of the Forum*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 5 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 4 and 4 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 42, 2 and 43, 1 ; AULUS GELLIUS, XIII, 3, 5.

39. Miss Lily Ross Taylor, of Bryn Mawr College, published in 1942 in the *Amer. Journ. of Philol.* (vol. 63, pp. 385-412) a well-documented article on *Caesar's Colleagues in the Pontifical College*.

40. For the military tribunes, cf. Hankel, *Die Ernennung und die soziale Stellung der römischen Kriegstribunen* (Dresden, 1889).

41. The *contio* was distinguished from the *comitia* in that it was not regarded as a constitutional form of public assembly and the proceedings were not carried to a vote. Generally speaking, all magistrates had the right (*jus contionis*) to summon the people to a *contio*. In effect, it was a preliminary meeting to which proposals for laws were submitted before they were taken before the *comitia* and where decisions to be taken later by the full assembly of the people might be checked beforehand.

42. A fragment of book III of the *Histories* of Sallust gives us information on the activities of the tribune Cn. Sicinius.

43. For the methods of guaranteeing this distribution of grain to the needy, cf. Carcopino, *La loi de Hiéron et les Romains*, pp. 179-181, 253-254, and the article *Frumentum* in *Pauly-Wissowa*, vol. VII, p. 174.

7 *Two Deaths—Two Speeches*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 6 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 5.

44. It is Cicero who asserts (*de orat.*, II, 11, 44) that Q. Lutatius Catulus, consul in 102, was the first to have accorded this distinction to his mother, Popilia. However, we read in Livy, for the year 390 B.C., that is, immediately

following the crushing of the Gauls by Camillus : ' The *matrones* were given thanks [for having sacrificed their gold] and, in addition, they were accorded the honour, along with the men, of a ritual eulogy pronounced upon them after their death ' (V, 50, 7) ; cf. Plutarch, *Cam.*, 8.

45. People were summoned to funeral ceremonies by a public crier who went through the city for the purpose of announcing the obsequies.

46. The Romans had a special band of musicians (the *siticipines*) who played only for burials. Their instrument (*longa tuba*) produced a particularly doleful note, as did the *cornicipines*, crooked like a bull's horn.

47. Male choirs would replace the hired women mourners in the solemnities of interments. The dead person was carried in effigy on a lying-in-state couch placed on a hearse.

### 8 Quaestor in Spain

Sources : SUETONIUS, 7 and 8 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 5 ; *Alex.*, 11 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 52, XLI, 24, 2 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 43, 4 ; [Anon.], *Bell. Hisp.*, 42, 1.

For reference : Schulten, *Hispania* (in *P.-W.*, VIII, col. 1965-2046).

48. Ever since Sulla had increased the number of quaestors to twenty (*lex Cornelia de XX quaestoribus*) the number of new quaestors was in excess of the duties which were assigned to them. There were : two quaestors of the *aerarium*, two consular quaestors, the *aquaria*, three (?) Italian quaestors, nine pro-praetorian quaestors (it was one of the latter offices which fell to Caesar).

49. Velleius Paterculus gives the name of his superior : Vetust Antistius. Cf. *Bell. Hisp.*, 42, 1.

50. Suetonius adds that, the night before, Caesar had had a dream which ' filled him with confusion ' : he had dreamed that he was ravishing his mother. The augurs to whom he turned for an interpretation of this dream ' encouraged him to give rein to the wildest expectations, since, in their eyes, it foretold that he should rule the whole world. The mother whom he had beheld within his power was no other than the earth, of which all men must be considered children ' (7). Cf. Dion Cassius. Plutarch assigns this dream to the night before Caesar crossed the Rubicon. Likewise, as to the resolutions made by Caesar before Alexander's statue, he dates them back to the period of his praetorship, and in his account this comment was made by Caesar upon reading a biography of Alexander.

51. Cf. Gagé, *Hercule-Melgart, Alexandre et les Romains à Gadès* (*Rev. des Et. anc.*, 1940, pp. 425-438) and De Witt, *Caesar and the Alexander legend* (*Class. W.*, 1942, vol. 36, pp. 51-53).

52. For the *jus Latii* conceded to the Transpadans by Pompey's father, cf. Cicero, *ad Att.*, V, 11, 2.

53. Cf. M. A. Levi, *Cesare e i Transpadani* (Turin, 1933).

9 *In the Service of Pompey and Crassus*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 9 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 4 and 5, *Pomp.*, 25 ; SALLUST, *Cat.*, 18 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVI, 43, 2-4 and 44, 3 ; ZONARAS, X, 3.

For reference : MEYER, *Caesars Monarchie*, pp. 11-20, GAZETTI, M. Licinio Crasso (*Athenaeum*, XXII-XXIII, 1944-1945, pp. 1-62).

54. Caesar as the lover of the wife of Gabinius : cf. Suet., 50 and *supra*, note 32.

55. The *senatus-consultum* decreed in Pompey's favour 'put almost all the earth under the dominion of a single man' (II, 31).

56. Cf. for Manilius, Velleius Paterculus, II, 33.

57. For the tactics employed by Caesar in this period, cf. Dion Cassius, XXXVII, 2.

58. Caesar's comment about Crassus is related by Plutarch (*Crass.*, 7). Strassburger finds it improbable (wrongly, I consider) and asks permission [*sic*] to 'ignore' it (*Caesars Eintritt in die Geschichte*, p. 64).

59. For the conjugal infidelities of Tertulla, cf. Suet., 50 ; Plut., *Cic.*, 25, *Crass.*, 1 ; Cicero, *Cael.*, 9, *ad fam.*, V, 8, 2.

60. The contemporary sources relating to this abortive plot are given by Suetonius (9). None of these documents have come down to us. Cf. the essay by Salmon, *Catiline, Crassus and Caesar*, in *Amer. Journ. of Phil.*, 1935, pp. 302-316 ; Jones, *Crassus, Caesar and Catiline*, in *Class. Weekly*, 1935, vol. XXIX, pp. 89-93 ; H. Frisch, *The First Catilinian Conspiracy (Classica et Mediaevalia*, 1947, vol. IX, pp. 10-36), and Rice Holmes, *The So-Called First Conspiracy of Catiline*, in *The Roman Republic*, by the same author, vol. I, pp. 446-449.

10 *The Aedile*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 10, 11 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 5, 6, 33, 53 ; SALLUST, *Cat.*, 49, 3 ; APPIAN, II, 1, 3 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 8, 2 ; VALLEIUS, PATERCULUS, II, 43, 4 ; PLINY, XXXIII, 53.

61. *Aediles curules*. Their inauguration dates back to 367 B.C. (T. L., VI, 42 and VII, 1). Cf. the articles by Humbert in the *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines* by Daremberg and Saglio (I, 1st part, pp. 95-100) and by Kubitschek in *P.-W.* (I, col. 448-464).

62. *Ludi romani*. After the *Consualia* and the *Equirria*, the games of greatest Roman antiquity (cf. T. L., I, 35 and the remarks of Mommsen in his *Röm. Forschungen*, II, p. 45). At the beginning they probably did not extend over more than a single day. Subsequently their duration was prolonged successively to two, three, four and ten days. In the last days of the Republic, they lasted a fortnight. Cf. Mommsen, *op. cit.*, p. 45, n. 4.

63. The *via Appia* from Rome to Capua (132 miles) was built by App.

Claudius Caecus during his censorship, and subsequently continued as far as Brundisium, the great port of embarkation for Greece and the East.

## II First Encounters with Cicero

*Sources :* SUETONIUS, 11 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 6, *Crass.*, 13 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 10, 2 ; CICERO, *de leg. agrar.*, I, 1, II, 41.

*For reference :* Cary, *Rome in the Absence of Pompeius* (Cambr. Anc. H., IX, pp. 475-505 ; more especially § V : *Caesar's Propaganda*, pp. 487-490). Cf. *infra* in the *Bibliographical Survey*, the heading 'Caesar and Cicero.'

64. At the height of the election Caesar induced the tribunes to lodge a proposal for a law purporting to rehabilitate the children of proscribed persons in the political rights of which Sulla had deprived them. Cicero attacked this measure in a speech now lost, but of which Pliny (VII, 117) and Quintilian (XI, 1, 85) speak with admiration. The motion was withdrawn.

65. For the relations between Caesar and the two candidates, Catiline and C. Antonius, cf. the commentary of Asconius on *Cic. expos. cons. suorum*, 65 *St.* (cf. 64).

66. For the duties of the *judex quaestionis*, cf. Mommsen, *Röm. St. R.*, II<sup>3</sup>, p. 589. This magistrate was similar to the praetor, although somewhat inferior in rank, half-way, so to speak, between aedile and praetor.

67. Cicero's comment : '[Luscius and Bellienus] have made their repudiations. You [Catiline] have not even allowed your shamelessness the action of a denial. O how highly should we extol the equity of judges who condemn Luscius in spite of his denials, and exculpate Catiline in spite of his admission !' (*In toga cand.*, 12).

68. For the proposal of Servilius Rullus, cf. Hardy, *The Policy of the Rullian Proposal in 63 B.C.*, in *Journ. of Philol.*, 1913, vol. XXXII, pp. 228-260, Sage, *Cicero and the Agrarian Proposals of 63*, in *Class. Journ.*, 1920, vol. XVI, p. 230, Afzelius, *Das Ackerverteilungsgesetz des P. Servilius Rullus* (*Classica et Mediaevalia*, 1940).

## 12 Pontifex Maximus

*Sources :* SUETONIUS, 13 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 7 ; SALLUST, *Cat.*, 49, 2 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 36 and 37, 1 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 43, 3 ; CICERO, *de leg. agrar.*, II, 18.

*For reference :* L. Ross Taylor, *The Election of the Pontifex Maximus in the Late Republic* (*Class Philol.*, 1942, vol. 37, pp. 421-424).

69. The Supreme Pontiff was required to live in a public edifice (cf. Pliny, XIX, 23, and Dion Cassius, LIV, 27, 3).

70. For the Regia, cf. Lafaye, *les Découvertes en Italie*, in *Rev. de l'hist. des religions*, 1887, pp. 332-333.

71. In the last days of the Republic, the Subura quarter was over-populated. Its inhabitants were mainly small tradesmen, craftsmen, and working people. It contained a large number of brothels, and the prostitutes swarmed in the streets. Cf. Persius, V, 32; Martial, VI, 66, I, XI, 61, 3 and 78, 11; Juvenal, XI, 51.

### 13 *The Trial of Rabirius*

Sources: SUETONIUS, 12; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 26-28; CICERO, *pro C. Rabirio*.

For reference: MEYER, *Der Perduellionsprozess der Rabirius im Jahre 63* (*op. cit.*, pp. 543-547) and RICE HOLMES, *The Prosecution of Rabirius* (*op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 452-455).

80. On the juridical nature of the trial, cf. Lange, *Röm. Alt.*, III<sup>2</sup>, p. 240, and Mommsen, *Röm. St. R.*, II<sup>3</sup>, p. 615. An excellent general survey is given by Lenglé in his essay, *Die Staatsrechtliche Form der Klage gegen C. Rabirius* (*Hermes*, 1933, vol. LXVIII, pp. 328-340).

81. Cf. Carcopino, *op. cit.*, p. 669.

82. The Janiculum, the hill opposite the *Campus Martius* on the right bank of the Tiber. A stronghold had been erected at its summit, and it was above this edifice that the flag flew. Cf. Richter, *Die Befestigung des Janiculum* (Berlin, 1882).

### 14 *On the Fringe of a Conspiracy*

Sources: SUETONIUS, 14; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 8, *Cic.*, 20, 21, *Cat. min.*, 22-24, 26; SALLUST, *Cat.*, 49, 2 and 4, 51; CICERO, *Cat.*, II, 19, IV, 7-10, *Flacc.*, 98, *ad Att.*, XII, 21, 1; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 36, 1; APPIAN, II, 6, 20-21.

For reference: CIACERI, *La congiura di Catilina e il nucleo storico dell'antica tradizione*, in *Processi politici e relazioni internazionali*, by the same author, pp. 123-168.

83. For Caesar's relations with Catiline on the eve of the conspiracy, cf. Schilling, *Catilina und Caesar*, in *Erdélyi Museum*, 1882, V and VI, and Rice Holmes, *The Alleged Complicity of Caesar and Crassus in the Conspiracy [of Catiline]* (*op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 470-473).

84. For the session of November 8, cf. Rabe, *Die Senatssitzung am 8. November des Jahres 63 v. Chr. und die Entstehung der ersten Catilinarischen Rede Ciceros* (1929, vol. XXIII, pp. 74-87). For the version of Caesar's speech given by Sallust, cf. (with some reservations) Lange's essay, *Das Strafverfahren gegen die Catilinarier, und Caesars und Catos darauf bezügliche Reden bei Sallust* (1884), and Arnold's note, *Caesar's Speech in behalf of the Catilinarians*, in *Class. Rev.*, 1887, p. 169.

85. For the session of December 5, cf. Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36 (criticizing

the theses of Drumann and Mommsen as expounded in their respective works), and the description given by Gelzer in his book *C. Julius Caesar, der Politiker, der Staatsmann* (ed. 1941, pp. 60-65).

86. Suetonius has observed: '[Caesar] drank very little wine' (53). Following the same author (*loc. cit.*) Cato was supposed to have remarked on one occasion: 'Of all those who were in league to overthrow the government, Caesar alone was not a drinker.'

## 15 The Praetor

*Sources:* SUETONIUS, 14, 15; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 8, *Cic.*, 23, *Cat. min.*, 27; CICERO, *ad Att.*, II, 24, 3, XII, 21, 1, *Pis.*, 6; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 21, 4 and 44, 1; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 40, 4; VALERIUS MAXIMUS, VI, 9, 5; TACITUS, *Hist.*, III, 72.

87. The temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. After standing for four centuries, it was burned by unknown hands, together with all the valuables which had been amassed there. Marius extracted from its ruins nearly a thousand pounds of gold (Tacitus, *Hist.*, III, 72; Appian, I, 83; Plutarch, *Sulla*, 27). Sulla had undertaken to rebuild it, and with this intention had brought from Athens several columns from the temple of the Olympian Jupiter (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, XXXI, 25, 61), but he died shortly afterwards, and it was Lutatius Catulus who assumed the direction of the work (T. L., *per.* 98; Aulus Gellius, II, 10).

88. Cf. Carcopino, *op. cit.*, p. 696.

89. *The quaesitor*. The criminal tribunal (*quaestio perpetua*) was sometimes presided over by the praetor in person, sometimes by a member of the jury chosen by the praetor or by means of drawing lots. In this event he bore the title of *quaesitor*. Cf. Zumpt, *Kriminalprozess der römischen Republik*, pp. 468-558.

## 16 Scandal of the Feast of the Bona Dea

*Sources:* SUETONIUS, 6, 74; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 10; CICERO, *ad Att.*, I, 13, 14, 16, 17.

90. The 'Good Goddess': according to Cicero, 'a goddess whose very name is a mystery beyond the power of man to know, and whom Clodius called the *Good Goddess* because she pardoned him for such an outrage' (*De arusp.*, XVII).

91. The *senatus-consultum* which indicted Clodius was approved by four hundred to fifteen (*Cic.*, *ad Att.*, I, 14, 5. Read the very colourful account of the session which Cicero gives in this letter.).

92. In his letter to Atticus (I, 16, 10), Cicero reproduces his reply to Clodius. This is an untranslatable play on words, since 'credo' means both 'I believe' and 'I give credit' (in the sense adopted by modern commercial language).

The Latin text runs : ' *Mihi vero inquam, XXV judices crediderunt, XXXI, quoniam nummos ante acceperunt, tibi nihil crediderunt.*'

### 17 *Propraetor in Spain*

*Sources :* SUETONIUS, 18, 54 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 11, 12, *Crass.*, 7 ; CICERO, *ad Att.*, II, 1, 9, *Balb.*, 43 ; APPIAN, II, 8, 26-27 and *Iber.*, 102 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 52-53 ; ZONARAS, X, 6 ; LIVY, *per.* 103.

93. 830 talents : Plutarch's figure. Appian talks of 25 million sesterces, which amounts to about the same.

94. The mention of the young Masintha accompanying Caesar to Spain is found in Suetonius. (71.)

95. Cf. the 'portrait' drawn by Suetonius (45) : 'Over-meticulous in the care of his person, he was not content with a close haircut and shave but went so far as to have his grey hairs plucked out. . . . He could not resign himself to his baldness . . . therefore he brushed his thin hair over his forehead.' For his athletic performances, cf. the same author (57). 'If rivers held up his progress,' Suetonius remarks, 'he would cross them by swimming or buoyed up by inflated goatskins, so that he often outdistanced his messengers' (*id.*).

96. To return to Suetonius : 'When he was proconsul in Spain, he did not confine himself to receiving from our allies the sums which he had begged from them to wipe out his debts [*sic* ; Napoleon III, commenting on this point, wrote, "One scarcely goes begging at the head of an army" (*Hist. de Jules César*, vol. I, p. 363)], but pillaged a number of places in Lusitania as if they were enemy cities, although they had not evaded their war contributions and had admitted him within their gates' (54).

### 18 *Candidate for the Consulship*

*Sources :* SUETONIUS, 18, 19 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 13, 14, *Cat. min.*, 31, *Pomp.*, 47, *Crass.*, 14, *Lucull.*, 42 ; CICERO, *ad Att.*, I, 17, II, II, 3, 3 ; APPIAN, II, 8, 28-30 and 9, 33-34 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVII, 54, 2-3 ; 55, 1 ; 56, 57 ; I ; 58, 1 ; XXXVIII, 5, 5 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 44, 2 ; FLORUS, II, 13, 9 ; EUTROPIUS, VI ; OROSIUS, VI, 17, 1 ; ZONARAS, X, 6 ; LIVY, *per.* 103.

97. Luceius : cf. the article on him by Münzer (*P.-W.*, vol. XIII, col. 1554-1559). After his defeat at the elections he seems to have withdrawn from all political activity in order to devote himself to financial matters and to literature.

98. The trafficking in votes : cf. the article *Ambitus*, by G. Humbert, in *Dict. des ant. gr. et rom.*, by Daremberg and Saglio, 1st vol., pp. 223-224.



19 *Formation of the First Triumvirate*

*Sources :* See pp. 103-104 of the present work.

*For reference :* Bersanetti, *Quando fu conclusa l'alleanza fra Cesare, Pompeo e Crasso ?* (Palermo, 1924) and *La tradizione antica e l'opinione degli storici moderni sul 'Primo Triumvirato'* (*Riv. Indo-Gr.-Ital.*, 1927, vol. XI, pp. 185-204); Sanders, *The So-Called First Triumvirate*, in *Memoirs of the Amer. Acad. in Rome*, 1932, vol. X, p. 55; Rice Holmes, *Caesar's Coalition with Pompey and Crassus* (*op. cit.*, I, pp. 474-476); Cary, *The First Triumvirate* (*Cambr. Anc. H.*, IX, pp. 506-521).

99. The secret kept by the triumvirs : cf. Dion Cassius, XXXVII, 58, 1 and XXXVIII, 5, 5. The vow to remain loyal to the concluded pact : Dion Cassius, XXXVII, 57, 1.

20 *A Consul Enters upon his Career*

*Sources :* SUETONIUS, 20, 54 and *Aug.*, 4; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 14, *Pomp.*, 47-48, *Cat. min.*, 32-33, *Lucull.*, 42; CAESAR, B.C., I, 14, 4, III, 107, 6; CICERO, *ad Att.*, II, 6, 2, II, 7, 3, II, 15, 2, II, 16, 1-2, II, 17, 1, II, 18, 1-2, II, 19, 2, II, 20, 6, II, 24, 4, VIII, 3, 3, IX, 24, 1, XIX, 2, 3, in *Vatin.*, 22, *Planc.*, 35, *Rab. Post.*, 6, *Phil.*, 2, 101; APPIAN, II, 10, 34 and 36, II, 11-12, II, 13, 46-47, III, 2, 5; DION CASSIUS, XXXVIII, 16, XXXVIII, 1, 1 and 4-5, XXXVIII, 2, 3, XXXVIII, 3, 1-2, XXXVIII, 4, 5, XXXVIII, 6, 1-7, XXXVIII, 7, 1 and 3-5, XXXVIII, 8, 2; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 44, 4 and 45, 2; VALERIUS MAXIMUS, II, 10, 7; AULUS GELLIUS, IV, 10, 1; QUINTILIAN, XII, 1, 16; ZONARAS, X, 6.

100. For the agrarian law proposed by Caesar, cf. Sembach, *Die Leges agrariae Caesaris* (Iena, 1923) and Meyer (*op. cit.*, pp. 61-72). General survey to be found in Cary, *The Land Legislation of Julius Caesar's First Consulship* (*Journ. of Philol.*, 1920, vol. XXXV, p. 174).

101. According to Valerius Maximus, Caesar ordered Cato's arrest because 'on one occasion, in spite of the fact that Caesar was consul at the time, [Cato] monopolized the whole session by inveighing against the State tax collectors' (II, 10, 7). We easily grasp the subtle difference : in this way Caesar is taking a stand on behalf of the capitalists—those acquisitive financiers who were harassing the people—and wants to prevent Cato from attacking them. I have followed Suetonius' version which appears more likely and fits better into the framework of events.

102. Pompey's reply is given by Plutarch (*Caes.*, 14).

103. The 'recalcitrant' Lucullus became considerably more amenable after

Caesar had subjected him to a treatment as radical as it was summary. He threatened him with an inquiry into his conduct as proconsul in Asia. 'As a result,' says Suetonius (20), 'he filled him with such fear that Lucullus submitted voluntarily.'

104. The 'opposition' of Bibulus was the theme of numerous witticisms among the Romans. Some facetious citizens, according to Suetonius (20), 'having to sign a document to make it valid, did not write, "*executed under the consulship of Caesar and Bibulus*," but "*under the consulship of Julius and Caesar*."' Satirical poems circulated in the city. Following is the epigram quoted by Suetonius:

It is not Bibulus, but Caesar, who has done this or that,  
And Consul Bibulus, what is he at? Briefly, nothing at all!

In the first of his letters to Caesar, Sallust wrote concerning Bibulus: 'We saw him [as a man] with a thick voice and a mentality more mischievous than cunning.' According to him, 'the consulship, which is the height of honour, has been [for Bibulus] the height of disgrace' (I, 9).

105. The agrarian law of Caesar and its consequences. By reason of an apportionment carried out without distinction between civilians and soldiers (Caesar intended to enable the population of Rome to participate in the benefits), about twenty thousand persons were able to receive shares. Subsequently, the allocations were granted not only in Italy from lands become vacant (either confiscated during the civil war or purchased) but also distributed in considerable number in the provinces, notably in Gaul and Spain. This was particularly true for Spain, where since 45, after the defeat of Pompey's sons (cf. *infra*, 3rd part, Chap. XVIII), Caesar had ordered the confiscation of land belonging to towns which had embraced Pompey's cause.

## 2I Matrimonial Transactions

Sources: SUTONIUS, 21; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 14, *Pomp.*, 47, *Cat. min.* 31; APPIAN, II, 14, 50; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 44, 3.

106. Caesar as the lover of Pompey's wife. To the remark quoted above by Suetonius (50), we may add the following lines from Catullus, who was completely *au courant* with the adulterous affairs of his day:

Under the first consulship of Pompey, there were two of them had their way with Moecilla;

And now he is a second time consul, the two of them remain.

But a thousand have grown on either one—a fertile crop of adulterous seed.

There is general agreement in identifying Caesar and his 'friend' Mamurra as the two who 'possessed' Moecilla (diminutive of Mucia). Cf. Deutsch, *Caesar and Mucia*, in *Philol. Quart.*, 1929, vol. VIII, pp. 218-222.

107. The two weddings took place in April, 59, as Carcopino has satisfactorily proved (*op. cit.*, p. 726, n. 302).

22 *Assignment of Provinces*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 22 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 14, *Pomp.*, 48, *Crass.*, 14, *Cat. min.*, 33 ; CAESAR, *B.G.*, II, 35, 2, III, 7, 1, V, 1, 5 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 44, 5 ; APPIAN, II, 13, 49 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVIII, 8, 5 ; OROSIUS, VI, 7, 1 ; EUTROPIUS, VI, 17, 1 ; ZONARAS, X, 6.

For reference : Cf. Mommsen, *Die Provinzen Caesars* (in his *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV).

108. For the *lex Vatinia*, cf. the account by Gelzer, *Die Lex Vatinia de imperio Caesaris* (which dates it from May-June, 59), in *Hermes*, 1928, vol. LXIII, pp. 113-137, and the article by T. Frank, *The Date of the Vatinian Law* (according to him, at the beginning of March, 59), in *Amer. Journ. of Philol.*, 1925, vol. XLI, pp. 276-277. J. Carcopino makes his case and sums up the question by placing the law in mid-April, 59, in an exhaustive note (*op. cit.*, p. 728, n. 304).

23 *The Opposition*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 9 and 20 ; PLUTARCH, *Lucull.*, 42 ; CICERO, *ad Att.*, II, 19-21, 24, *Vatin.*, 24-26 ; APPIAN, II, 12, 44 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVIII, 9, 2-4.

109. Cicero wrote to Atticus : ' With an edict drawn up in the style of Archilochus, Bibulus has postponed the *comitia* to the 15th of the November kalends ' (*ad Att.*, II, 20, 6).

110. Of Caesar, working up the mob against Bibulus : ' It was in vain that he delivered his inflammatory exhortation, for he failed to evoke a single outburst ' (*Cic. ad Att.*, II, 21, 5).

111. Valerius Maximus (VI, 2, 9) seems to have misread this passage in Cicero's letter to Atticus : ' ... the tragedian Dephilos has shamefully broken loose against our Pompey.'

112. I have made a more detailed study of the Vettius affair in my *Brutus*, pp. 22-26. Cf. also Gentile, *l'Opposizione aristocratica e la congiura di L. Vezzio* (*Riv. di filol.*, 1878, vol. VI, pp. 204-233).

24 *The Julian Laws*

Sources : SÜETONIUS, 19 ; CICERO, *ad Att.*, VI, 25, *ad fam.*, VIII, 8, 3, *Sest.*, 135, *Vatin.*, 27 and 29, *Rabir. Post.*, 8, *Pis.*, 37, *de prov. cons.*, 3, *de domo*, XXIV ; SALLUST, *Jug.*, XXVII, 3 ; APPIAN, II, 13, 49.

113. Observe this remark of Plutarch : ' He proclaimed laws worthy not of a consul but of an audacious tribune ' (14).

114. Cf. Pocock, *Lex de Actis Cn. Pompeii confirmandis. Lex Julia or Lex Vatinia ?* in *Class. Quart.*, 1925, vol. XIX, pp. 16-21.

115. Cf. Carcopino, *op. cit.*, p. 720. See in the Digest, Book XLVIII, section XI.

25 *Balance Sheet for the First Consulship*

Sources : Suetonius, 20 ; Dion Cassius, XXXVIII, 12 (the events of December 31) ; Aulus Gellius, V, 19, 6 ; Cicero, *ad Att.*, II, 5, 3 and 9, 1, *Vatin.*, XI, 27, *de domo*, XIII, XV-XVI, XXIX.

116. In drawing up the balance sheet of Caesar's first consulship, modern historians have particularly emphasized its political import. Thus, Carcopino, *op. cit.*, 733 : 'The overthrow of the Republican government dates from the consulship of Caesar.' Similarly, Gelzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-115. Cf. Schneiderhan, *Die Politik des Gaius Julius Caesar in seinem ersten Consulate* (Rottweil, 1859), Willmann, *Caesars erstes Consulat* (Halberstadt, 1861), Hardy, *Caesar anno 59*, in *Journ. of Philol.*, 1913, vol. XXXIII, no. 65. Napoleon III's opinion is worthy of note : 'Without changing the fundamental laws of the Republic, Caesar had gained one great end : he had abolished anarchy in favour of a vigorous power controlling both the Senate and the *comitia*' (*op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 401).

117. Clodius' *tractatio ad plebem* must have occurred, as Carcopino has demonstrated (*op. cit.*, p. 724, n. 296), in the last days of March. As early as January, 60, the tribune of the plebs, C. Herennius, 'a criminal and a starveling', to quote Cicero (*ad Att.*, I, 19, 5), had tried this stroke, doubtless at the instigation of Clodius. He did not succeed, 'because he met with almost universal opposition', as Cicero tells us (*id.*), or, rather, because Caesar had declined to support the plan. For Clodius' doings, cf. Pocock, *Publius Clodius and the Acts of Caesar* (*Class. Quart.*, 1924, vol. XVIII, pp. 59-65, and 1925, vol. XIX, pp. 182-184), and Marsh, *The Policy of Clodius* (*Class. Quart.*, 1927, vol. XXI, pp. 30-35).

26 *Before the Great Departure*

Sources : Suetonius, 23 and 48 ; Plutarch, *Cic.*, 41, *Pomp.*, 48 ; Dion Cassius, XXXVIII, 17 ; Cicero, *ad Att.*, II, 18, 22, *ad Quint. fr.*, I, 2.

118. Cf. Suet., 73 : 'C. Memmius had made a number of violent speeches against him to which [Caesar] had replied, in writing, with equal violence.' This did not prevent him subsequently from supporting Memmius' candidacy for the consulship (*id.*) ; cf. Suet., *Ner.*, II, 2.

119. 'As a means of safeguarding his future,' Suetonius reports, '[Caesar] took the greatest care to ally himself every year with the magistrates in office, and to support or permit access to positions of honour only to those candidates who were pledged to defend him in his absence ; he did not hesitate to require an oath of allegiance from some of them, or even a written promise.'

120. The most detailed and best informed account of the banishment of Cicero is given by Ciaceri in his masterly work, *Cicerone e i suoi tempi*. Meyer presents an accurate and concise *resumé* (*op. cit.*, pp. 94-102). In 1725 there appeared in Paris *Histoire de l'exil de Cicéron*, by J. Morabin (a 29-chapter volume of 474 pages in duodecimo), which obviously no longer has any interest except as a literary curiosity.

## PART TWO

### THE CONQUEST OF GAUL

#### 27 Campaign against the Helvetii

**Sources :** CAESAR, B.G., I, 7-29 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 17, 18 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXVIII, 31-33 ; APPIAN, *Celt.*, I, 3, 15 ; FLORUS, I, 45, 2-3 ; LIVY, *per.* 103 ; OROSIUS, VI, 7, 3-5 ; ZONARAS, X, 6.

**For reference :** JULLIAN, *Histoire de la Gaule*, vol. III, pp. 193-220 (very important) and TAUBLER, *Bellum Helveticum, Eine Caesarstudie* (Zürich, 1924), which is a useful supplement to Jullian's writings and expresses critical developments which are far advanced. The question has been raised and discussed at length : is Caesar to be believed and what is the exact historical value of his account of the campaign against the Helvetii ? Two schools of thought confront each other : for (Fröhlich, *Die Glaubwürdigkeit Caesars in seinem Bericht über den Feldzug gegen die Helvetier*, Aarau, 1903) and against (Rauchenstein, *Der Feldzug Caesars gegen die Helvetier*, Zürich, 1882 ; cf. Kloevekorn, *Die Kämpfe Caesars gegen die Helvetier im J. 58, Eine Kritik von Caesars Darstellung*, Leipzig, 1889). Jullian writes on this theme : ' I confess that I do not understand the attacks that have been levelled against the *Commentaries* in regard to this war. His narrative is sufficiently clear, the figures do not seem to me to be exaggerated, and if he can be charged with rather too little accuracy as to places [a circumstance which seems perfectly normal to me and very pardonable in Caesar, who could hardly have known the science of cartography as we know it to-day. G.W.] and has inadequately explained his conduct and movements, that is much after his manner ' (*op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 194, note). He provides the list of works devoted to this campaign by going back as far as the seventeenth century (*id.*, p. 193, n. 1). I shall mention here only the essays which have either escaped Jullian's notice or have appeared since the publication of his third volume, and which have shed the least degree of new light on this field. The very valuable *Guide illustré des campagnes de César en Gaule*, by L.-A. Constans (Paris, 1929) will considerably assist the reader who is not versed in topographical matters to find his bearings. For general works relating to this part the reader should refer to the section CAESAR IN GAUL in the bibliographical survey.

121. The question has been put as to whether Caesar owed his victory to his scientific strategy or to chance. Thus Otis, in his essay *The Helvetian Campaign. Was Caesar wise or wilful?* (*Class. Journ.*, 1914, pp. 241-250). For the political conditions which favoured the implementation of Caesar's scheme of conquest, cf. Cramer, *Caesar und seine Zeit zum Beginn des gallischen Krieges* (Mühlheim-a./-Rh., 1890).—The figure of 350,000: cf. Klotz, *Die Zahl der Helvetier* (*Zeitsch. f. d. österr. Gymn.*, 1913, pp. 865-869).

122. For the march of the Helvetii: cf. Klotz, *Der Helvetierzug* (*Neue Jahrb. f. Klass. Philol.*, 1915, pp. 609-632). Caesar speaks of the entente between the Helvetii and the Aedui in *B.G.*, I, 3 (cf. the analysis of this passage by Keith in *Class. Journ.*, 1914, vol. IX, and the essay by Radin, *The Orgetorix Episode*, *id.*, 1921, vol. XVI, pp. 42-48).

123. The account by Polyænus occurs in his Eighth Book (23, 2). Cf. the article by Jullian, *Rama? Une épisode du passage des Alpes par César*, in *Rev. des Et. anc.*, 1909, vol. XI, pp. 135-145, and the note by Valentine, *Caesar*, *B.G.*, I, 10, in *Class. Weekly*, 1931, vol. XXV, pp. 49-51.

124. The route followed by Caesar: Jullian, vol. III, p. 203, Napoleon III, vol. II, p. 64, Von Goeler, vol. I, p. 13.

125. The term *vergobret* (*B.G.*, I, 16, 4-5): cf. the note of Kunze in *Philol. Wochenschr.*, 1934, p. 1140, and that of Voigt, *id.*, 1936, pp. 367-368.

126. Considius. For this personage, cf. Dukat, *Publius Considius* (*Philol. Wochenschr.*, 1940, pp. 351-352) and Maurenbrecher's reply, *Nochmals Caesar und Considius* (*id.*, 1941, pp. 666-670).

127. There has been a great deal of argument over the location of this battle. To the details provided by Jullian (vol. III, p. 213, note) the reader should add Rau, *Die Örtlichkeit der Helvetierschlacht* (*Klio*, 1927, vol. XXI, pp. 374-384).

128. The quotation from Jullian: *op. cit.*, III, p. 223.

## 28 Ariovistus

**Sources:** CAESAR, *B.G.*, I, 30-54; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 19; DION CASSIUS, XXXVIII, 34-50; APPIAN, *Celt.*, I, 3, 16; LIVY, *per.* 104; CICERO, *de prov. cons.*, 33; FLORUS, I, 45, 9-13; OROSIUS, VI, 7, 6-10; ZONARAS, X, 6; TACITUS, *hist.*, IV, 73; FRONTINUS, I, 11, 3, II, 1, 16, IV, 5, 11; POLYAENUS, VIII, 23, 4; CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.*, I, 15, 72.

**For reference:** JULLIAN, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 221-241, and STOFFEL, *Guerre de César et d'Arioviste et premières opérations de César en l'an 702* (Paris 1890). Rice Holmes has contributed a very good critical analysis: *Caesar's Campaign against Ariovistus* in his book, *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul*, pp. 627-642. I mention, as a simple historical curiosity, the *Dissertatio de bello Julii Caesaris et Ariovisti Germanorum regis* of J. Weiss, published in 1682 at Giessen;

likewise the *Disputatio C. J. Caesaris advers. Ariovist. regem aliosque germanos gesta bella explicans* of Chr. Cellarius, published in 1702 at Halle, and *Julius Caesars Krieg mit dem Germanier-König Ariovist*, by Ph.-L. Haas, published at Mainz in 1790. The 'diplomatic' phases of the conflict between Caesar and Ariovistus have been carefully analysed in a recent essay by Klostermann, *Caesar und Ariovist* (*Klio*, 1940, vol. XXXIII, pp. 308-334).

129. Which Gallic tribes were represented in the deputation which came to congratulate Caesar? Rice Holmes endeavours to establish this in a note, p. 626 in his book, *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul*.

130. For the dominion of Ariovistus, cf. the note of Klotz, *Das Gebiet Ariovists* (*Zeitschr. f. d. österr. Gymn.*, 1913, pp. 865-869).

131. For the strategic position of Besançon the reader may refer to a passage of *De Bello Gallico* (I, 38, 5), which has formed the object of a learned commentary: in 1924 by Lambert in *Class. Weekly*, vol. XVIII, pp. 115-117, and in 1925 by Hahn, *id.*, vol. XIX, pp. 57-58.

132. In Plutarch's version Caesar assembles these young officers and informs them that 'faint-hearted and spineless as they are', they can leave his army.

Cf. Hagendahl, *The Mutiny of Vesontio. A Problem of Tendency and Credibility in Caesar's Gallic War* (*Classica et Mediaevalia*, 1944, pp. 1-40).

133. For the passage I, 40, 5 of *De Bello Gallico*, in which Caesar appraises the military valour of the Germans, cf. the commentary of Nutting in *Class. Journ.*, 1926, vol. XXII, pp. 616-618.

134. The place of the meeting between Caesar and Ariovistus has been examined by A. Bazouin, *Topographie de l'entrevue entre César et Arioviste* (*Rev. des Et. lat.*, 1936, vol. XIV, pp. 28-29).—Rice Holmes has studied the distance covered by Caesar in his note *On the Probable Length of Caesar's March from Vesontio against Ariovistus* (*op. cit.*, pp. 626-627).

135. Caesar claims that he did not wish to have a further meeting with Ariovistus because the Germans had hurled their darts at his soldiers after the first conference (*B.G.*, I, 47, 2; cf. the commentary on this passage by Bonnet in *Rev. de Philol.*, 1883, vol. VII, p. 131).

136. The scholars have expended a great deal of effort in order to identify the locality of the battle. Cf. in the first place the highly documented note of Jullian, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 231, n. 4. Thereafter see the following essays: Veith, *Die Ariovisterschlacht im Jahre 58 v. Chr.* (*Monatsschr. f. d. Gesch. West-deutschl.*, 1879, vol. V, pp. 495-513), Wiegand, *Die Schlacht zwischen Cäsar und Ariovist* (*Mittheil. d. Gesellsch. f. Erhaltung der gesch. Denkmäler im Elsass*, 1893, 2nd series, XVI, pp. 1-9), Kroon, *La défaite d'Arioviste* (*Meddaelingen van het Nederlandsch Inst. te Rome*, 1937, vol. V, p. 135).

137. Intervention of P. Crassus. Caesar writes: 'He was in a better position to follow the action than those who were involved in the mêlée' (*B.G.*, I, 52, 7). This passage has been commented upon by Rau in *Philol. Wochenschr.*, 1928, vol. XLVIII, p. 446.

138. Plutarch has no hesitation in fixing at 80,000 the number of Germans who perished on the field of battle. This estimate transcends the limits of common sense. For the flight of the troops of Ariovistus, cf. *B.G.*, I, 43, 1, and the note by Dain, *A propos de César*, *B.G.*, I, 53, 1 in *Rev. des Et. lat.*, vol. XV, pp. 269-272.

## 29 Conquest of Belgium

*Sources* : CAESAR, *B.G.*, II, 1-35 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 20, 21 ; CICERO, *de prov. cons.*, 26, 27 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXIX, 1-5 ; APPIAN, *Celt.*, I, 4 ; LIVY, *per.*, 104 ; FLORUS, I, 45, 4 ; OROSIUS, VI, 7, 11-16.

*For reference* : JULLIAN, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 242-273 ; CONSTANS (who has turned the lessons of the 1914-1918 war to advantage), *op. cit.*, pp. 38-46 ; GANTIER, *la Conquête de la Belgique par Jules César* (Brussels, 1882 ; helpful supplement to the account given by Jullian) ; POQUET, *Jules César et son entrée dans la Gaule-Belgique* (Laon, 1864) ; BAILLY, *César en Belgique* (Brussels, 1910). For questions of topography, the reader may refer again to the above mentioned itinerary guide by Constans ; the topographical information of Jullian ; Dayrol's *Observations sur les positions occupées successivement par l'armée romaine que commandait César . . . pendant sa campagne contre les Belges* (Beauvais, 1849), and Peigné-Delacourt's *J. César, ses itinéraires en Belgique* (Peronne, 1876).

139. Caesar's operations on the banks of the Aisne have provoked numerous essays, some of which, the work of local scholars, assume the character of personal polemics. Several of these may be cited in chronological order : 1860, Melleville, *Réponse a un travail de M. de Saulcy, sur la première campagne de César dans les Gaules et sur le passage de l'Aisne par ce général* (*Bull. de la Soc. Acad. de Laon*, vol. X).—1864, Fallue, *le Passage de l'Aisne par Jules César* (*id.*, vol. XIV).—1899, Rice Holmes, *Where did Caesar cross the Aisne ?* (*op. cit.*, pp. 645-652. Important).—1906, Lehmann, *Die Örtlichkeit des Kampfes Caesars an der Axona* (*Klio*, vol. VI).—1911, McIntosh, *Caesar's Position on the Axona* (*Hermathena*, vol. XXXVII).—1913, Maquet, *les Opérations de César sur les bords de l'Aisne en l'an 697* (Soissons).—1915, Biedebault, *Caesars Kämpfe an der Aisne und der Sambre* (*Strassburger Post*, July 4, 1915).—1916, Schlossmann, *Die Kämpfe Caesars an der Aisne im jetzigen Gefechtsbereich der sächsischen Truppen* (Leipzig).—1918, Madelin, *les Batailles de l'Aisne* (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. LXVI). Hough, *Caesar's Camp on the Aisne* (*Class. Journ.*, 1941, pp. 337-345).

140. Where was Bibrax situated ? Cf. Vuaflart, *Sur le Bibrax des Commentaires de César* (Laon, 1862).

141. Where was Bratuspantium ? Cf. Hayaux du Tilly, *Etude sur l'emplacement certain de l'oppidum Bratuspantium de César et rectification de quelques erreurs*



graves reproduites d'après les commentaires concernant les Bellovaques (Tours, 1879). For Caesar's campaign against the Bellovaci, cf. the essays of Peigné-Delacourt (Beauvais, 1862), of Gratier (Noyon, 1863), of Letonnaix (Senlis, 1866), and of Peigné-Delacourt (*Etude nouvelle sur la campagne de J. César contre les Bellovaques*, Senlis, 1869).

142. For the different peoples which composed Belgian Gaul, cf. Vlamincx, *Les Aduatuques, les Ménapiens et leurs voisins. Position géographique de ces peuples à l'époque de J. César* (*Messenger des sc. hist. ou arch., des arts et de la bibl. de Belgique*, 1882, pp. 373-476); the same, *Nouvelles considérations sur l'habitat des Aduatuques et des Ménapiens* (*id.*, 1884, pp. 270-297); the same, *Le territoire des Aduatuques* (Gand, 1888); the same, *La Ménapie et les contrées limitrophes à l'époque de J. César* (*Annales de l'Ac. d'arch. de Belgique*, 1878, vol. XXXIV, pp. 357-603); Schuermans, *Les Aduatuques sur la Meuse* (*Ann. de la Soc. arch. de Namur*, 1895, vol. XXI, pp. 243-286); Terninck, *Histoire de l'Attrebatie avant le VI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Amiens, 1874).

143. Battle of the Sambre: cf. Boulmont, *L'emplacement de la bataille de la Sambre* (*Rev. Belge*, 1924, vol. III, pp. 19-34); Rice Holmes, *The Battle with the Nervii*, in his book *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul*, pp. 654-660 (a technical, closely reasoned argument).

144. Caesar's gesture in snatching the shield from a soldier 'who was fighting with too much caution' as recorded in his *Commentaries* is likewise mentioned by Valerius Maximus, doubtless from the same source (III, 2, 19). Cf. Plutarch, *Caes.*, 20.

145. The number of Nervii massacred: Plutarch reproduces it exactly according to the evidence of the *Commentaries*.

146. Aduatuca-Namur? Cf. Wauters, *Quelques observations à propos de l'Aduatuca de César* (*Bull. de l'Ac. de Belgique*, 1862, 2nd series, vol. XIII); Dederich, *Lag das Castell Aduatuca nach Cäsars Erzählung rechts oder links von der Maas?* (*Monatsschr. f. d. Gesch. Westdeutschl.*, 1879, vol. V, pp. 304-318); Veith, *Oppidum Aduatucorum von Cäsar belagert im Jahre 57 v. Chr.* (*id.*, 1880, vol. VI, pp. 229-239).

147. For the campaign of Crassus in Armorica, cf. Jullian, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 273-275.

### 30 The Lucca Interlude

Sources: Suetonius, 24; Plutarch, *Caes.*, 21, *Crass.*, 14, *Pomp.*, 51; Cicero, *ad fam.*, I, 7, 10 and 9, 9-10, *ad Att.*, IV, 8b, 2, *ad Quint.*, fr., II, 6.

For reference: Meyer, *Die Konferenz von Luca und ihre Folgen*, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-148.

148. For the recall of Cicero the principal work of reference is that of Ciaceri quoted above, to be supplemented by the pages which Meyer devotes to this affair (*op. cit.*, pp. 107-113).—For Quintus Cicero, cf. Gentile, *Il fratello di Cicerone* (*Rass. settiman.*, 1881, vol. VIII, pp. 119-123).

149. Caesar's stay in Illyricum : Carcopino mentions an inscription which came to light in the *Boll. di arch. e storia dalmata* of 1904, which allows us to conclude that Caesar was still at Auilea at the beginning of March, 56 (*op. cit.*, p. 776, n. 98). The 'conference' of Lucca took place on April 15.

### 31 Submission of Armorica

Sources : CAESAR, B.G., III, 7-19 ; DION CASSIUS, XXXIX, 40-43 and 46 ; FLORUS, I, 45, 5-6 ; LIVY, *per.*, 104 ; OROSIUS, VI, 8, 16-17 and 19-22 ; STRABO, IV, 4, 1.

For reference : RICE HOLMES, *The Theatre of the War with the Veneti* (*op. cit.*, pp. 663-674) ; BLANCHARD, *César sur les côtes guerlandaises* (*Bull. de la Soc. arch. de Nantes*, 1883, vol. XXII, pp. 191-171).

150. Pliny, writing roughly a century after Caesar's time, reports that the Britons used a kind of large wicker-basket covered with leather for sailing (IV, 30, 16). Diodorus mentions that the tin which was abundant in the isle was transported to the continent in foreign ships (V, 22).

151. For the insurrection of the Veneti, cf. Jullian, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 287-300 ; Kerviler, *César et les Vénètes* (Paris, 1881) ; Balagny, *Jules César au pays des Namnètes et des Vénètes* (*Bull. de la Soc. arch. et hist. de Nantes*, 1936, vol. LXXVI, pp. 121-174).—The assistance of the Britons is mentioned in B.G., III, 9, 10, and confirmed by Orosius, VI, 8, 16.

152. Caesar quartered at Angers : cf. Renzi, *Le Camps de César dans le pays des Andes* (*l'Investigateur*, 1866, pp. 312-316).

153. For the operations of Q. Titurius Sabinus in Normandy, cf. Jullian, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 300-303 ; Quenault, *Nouvelles observations sur la défaite de Viridorix* (Coutances, 1862) and Pérès, *La conquête du Cotentin par les Romains. Sabinus au camp de Montcastré* (Saint-Lô, 1913).

154. Who is Decimus Brutus ? Where does he come from ? Cf. Bon-durant, *Decimus Junius Brutus, A Historical Study* (Chicago, 1907).

155. For the naval operations against the Veneti, cf. Rice Holmes, *Caesar's Operations against the Veneti* (*op. cit.*, pp. 674-676) ; Blancho, *Guerre maritime de César contre les Vénètes* (Sarzeau, 1899) ; Rolfe, *J. Brutus and the Ships of the Veneti* (*Class. Weekly*, vol. XI, pp. 106-107) ; Lisle du Dréneuc, *Des Gaulois Vénètes de la Grande-Brière et du théâtre de la bataille navale de Brutus dans le Cornuailles* (s.l., 1886) ; Toulouse, *Etude sur la bataille navale de Morsang-Saintry* (Paris, 1891).

156. The expedition against the Morini and the Menapii is related by Caesar in B.G., III, 28-29. The reader may supplement this by Dion Cassius, XXXIX, 44 and Florus, I, 45, 6.

157. For the campaign of Crassus in Aquitaine, cf. Jullian, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 303-311.

## 32 German Campaign

Sources : CAESAR, B.G., IV, 1-19 ; Suetonius, 24 ; Plutarch, *Caes.*, 22, *Cat. Min.*, 51, *comp. Nic.-Crass.*, 4 ; Dion Cassius, XXXIX, 47-48 ; Appian, *Celt.*, 18, 1, 4 ; Livy, *per.*, 105 ; Florus, I, 45, 14-15 ; Orosius, VI, 8, 23 and 9, 1 ; Zonaras, X, 6.

For reference : Julian, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 319-336 ; Bowie, *Caesar wars with the Germans* (Oxford, 1930).

158. The Germans as seen by Caesar : cf. Böhm *Beiträge, welche C. Julius Caesar in seinen Commentarien 'de bello gallico' zur Ethnologie der Germanen liefert* (Sachsisch-Regen, 1881) ; Kroon, *Caesar over het grondbezit bij de Germanen* (*Tijdschr. voor Gesch.*, 1923, vol. XXXV, pp. 270-278) ; Schmaus, *Das germanische Agrarwesen zur Zeit Cäsars* (Bayr. Bl. Gymn., 1928, LXIV, pp. 289-293). A combined survey of the political and economic situation of the Germans at this period is given by Schulz in his essay *Über die wirtschaftlichen und politischen Verhältnisse bei den Germanen zur Zeit des C. Julius Caesar* (Klio, 1911, vol. XI, pp. 48-82).

159. The arrival of the Usipetes and the Tencteri on the left bank of the Rhine : cf. Dederich, *Wo sind die Usiepten und Tenchterer über den Rhein übergegangen ?* (*Monatsschr. f. d. Gesch. Westdeutschl.*, 1878, vol. IV, pp. 688-693) ; Constans (*op. cit.*, p. 52) points to their crossing opposite Cleves and their encampment in the district of Cleves, Nijmegen, Goch, between the Rhine and the Meuse.

160. The *lex Licinia-Pompeia*, which Pompey and Crassus promulgated upon their re-appointment as consuls, assigned to Caesar a further *quinquennium* which in effect only prolonged his term by four years and two months, the two months of the year 50 which he was encroaching upon being counted as a full year. Cf. the proof of J. Carcopino, *op. cit.*, p. 784, n. 117.

161. The massacre of the Usipetes and the Tencteri. General background : Bergk, *Caesars Feldzug gegen die Usipeter und Tenchterer* (see *Zur Geschichte und Topographie der Rheinlande in römischer Zeit*, by the same author, pp. 1-24, 1882). The battle : Dederich, *Wo hat Caesar die Usipeten und Tenchterer besiegt und wo ist er über den Rhein gegangen ?* (*Jahrb. d. Ver. F. Alterthumsfreunde im Rheinlande*, 1844, vol. VI, pp. 252-286) ; Veith, *Cäsars Schlacht gegen die Usipeter und Tenchterer im Jahre 55 v. Chr.* (*Monatsschr. f. d. Gesch. Westdeutschl.*, 1880, vol. V, pp. 1-23) ; Walker, *Where did Caesar defeat the Usipetes and Tencteri ?* (*Class. Journ.*, 1921, vol. XVII, pp. 77-86) ; Rice Holmes, *Where were the Usipetes and Tencteri defeated ?* (*op. cit.*, pp. 680-693. A minute and exhaustive examination of the problem.).

162. Caesar on the Rhine : there are numerous German essays. Several of the most characteristic are listed here in chronological order : 1846, Dederich, *Caesar am Rhein* (*Jahrb. d. Ver. f. Alterthumsfreunde im Rheinl.*, vol. IX, pp. 191-201).—1867, Cohausen, *Caesars Feldzüge gegen die germanischen Stämme am Rhein* (*id.*, vol. XLIII, pp. 1-56).—1870, Möhring, *Julius Caesar im nordöstlichen*

Gallien und am Rhein (Kreuznach).—1880, Veith, *Cäsars Rheinübergänge in den Jahren 55 und 53 v. Chr.* (Monatsschr. f. d. Gesch. Westdeutschl., vol. VI, pp. 87–112).—1882, Düntzer, *Caesars Legionen am Rhein* (Westdeutsche Zeitschr. f. Gesch. u. Kunst, vol. I, pp. 294–308).

163. A great deal of ink has been spilled over the question of determining where and how this bridge had been built. In the final analysis, the question has not been resolved. Some (notably Napoleon III) put it near Bonn, others near Cologne (Essellen) or in the neighbourhood of Xanten (Cohausen). In 1744 the ruins of a bridge were discovered at Engers, between Coblenz and Andernach, and immediately declared to be those of Caesar's bridge (Hontheim, *Prodromus Hist. Trevirensis*, 1757, I, p. 209), but there was nothing to confirm the truth of this. However, Rice Holmes expressed himself in favour of this spot.—Cf. Feldbausch, *Über die Construction der Brücke, welche J. Caesar über den Rhein schlug* (Heidelberg, 1830); Eberz, *Über die Structur von Caesars Rheinbrücke* (Zeitschr. f. d. Alterthumswissensch., 1864, 51–52); Essellen, *Zur Frage, wo Julius Caesar die beiden Rheinbrücken schlagen liess* (Hamm); Prévost, *Dissertation sur le pont construit par César pour passer le Rhin* (Saumur, 1865); Colhausen, *Caesars Rheinbrücken philologisch, militärisch und technisch untersucht* (Leipzig, 1867); Maurer, *Noch einmal Julius Cäsars Brücke über den Rhein* (Mainz, 1883); Rheinhard, *C. Julius Caesar's Rhein-Brücke* (Stuttgart, 1883); Schneider, *Cäsars Rheinbrücke* (Berl. philol. Wochenschr., 1884, 6, pp. 161–166); Widmann, *Cäsars Rheinbrücke* (Gymn., 1885, II, pp. 367–376); Arnold, *The Bridge over the Rhine* (Class. Rev., 1887, p. 168); Hermes, *Zu Cäsars Rheinbrücke* (Gymnasium, 1892, 9, pp. 301–304); Hubo, *Zu Caesars Rheinbrücke* (Jahrb. f. class. Philol., 1892, vol. CXLV, pp. 485–492); the same, *Noch einmal Cäsars Rheinbrücke* (Gymnasium, 1892, 13, pp. 461–466); Frigell, *Textkritik öfver Caesarkapitlet om Rhenbryggan* (Pedagogisk Tidskrift, 1894, vol. XXX, pp. 121–128); Claflin, *Caesar's Bridge and the Modern Offensive-Defensive Strategy* (Class. Weekly, 1914, vol. VIII, p. 208); Rice Holmes, *Where did Caesar make his First Bridge over the Rhine?* (op. cit., pp. 694–697, 1899, a good survey); the same, *Caesar's Bridge over the Rhine* (id., pp. 697–709); Schramm, *Cäsars Rheinbrücke 55 v. Chr.* (Philol. Wochenschr., 1926, pp. 268–270, 1403–1404); Saatzmann, Jüngst and Thielscher, *Caesars Rheinbrücke* (Bonner Jahrb., 1938–1939, CXLIII, pp. 82–208).

### 33 Expedition into Britain

Sources: CAESAR, B.G., IV, 30–36 and 38, 5, V, 1–23 (for the second expedition); Suetonius, 25, 47; Plutarch, *Caes.*, 23, comp. Nic.-Crass., 4; Dion Cassius, XXXIX, 50–52 and 53, 2; Livy, per., 105; Velleius Paterculus, II, 46, 1; Valerius Maximus, III, 2, 23; Florus, I, 45, 16–17; Eutropius, VI, 17, 3; Orosius, VI, 9, 2; Tacitus, *Agric.*, 13; Lucan, II, 571 et seq.; Diodorus of Sicily, V, 21, 1–2; Strabo, IV, 5, 2–3. Add, for the second expedition: Cicero, *add Att.*, IV, 15, 10, IV, 16, 7,

IV, 18, 5, *ad fam.*, VII, 6, 2, VII, 7, 1, VII, 17, 3, *ad Quint. fr.*, II, 13, 1-2, II, 15, 4, III, 1, 10; FLORUS, I, 45, 18; OROSIUS, VI, 9, 4-9; DION CASSIUS, XL, 1-3; APPIAN, *Celt.*, I, 5, 19; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 47, 1; POLYAENUS, VIII, 23, 5; SENECA, *ad Marc. de consol.*, 14, 3.

*For reference* : particularly RICE HOLMES, *Ancient Britain and the Invasions of Julius Caesar* (Oxford, 1907, principal work). LEWIN'S book, *The Invasion of Britain by Julius Caesar* (London, 1862) has dated but contains many useful facts. Add the essay of MALDEN, *Caesar's Expeditions to Britain*, in *Journ. of Philol.*, 1888-1891, vol. XVII, pp. 163-178 and XIX, pp. 193-199, and BARWICK, *Der Britannienexkurs* (in his book *Caesars Commentarii und das Corpus Caesarianum*, pp. 3-33; this contains a close analysis of the passages relating to the expedition). Less important in this connection is JULLIAN (*op. cit.*, pp. 336-362).

164. The pearls of Britain : cf. Deutsch, *Caesar and the Pearls of Britain* (*Class. Journ.*, 1924, vol. XIX, pp. 503-505). According to Suetonius, it was asserted in Rome that Caesar 'had attacked Britain in the hope of finding pearls there, and that, in order to identify the richest ones, he occasionally weighed them in his own hand' (4, 7).

165. This question of the time element is the subject of a treatise which dates from 1773 : Owen, *Remarks on the Time Employed in Caesar's Two Expeditions Into Britain* (*Archaeologia*, pp. 159-168). Cf. Rice Holmes, *The Julian Calendar and the Chronology of Caesar's Invasions of Britain* (*Ancient Britain*, pp. 706-735).

166. According to Eutropius, before Caesar's time, 'the Britons had never even heard of the Romans'.

167. General surveys of the first expedition : Rice Holmes, *Caesar's First Invasion of Britain* (in his *Ancient Britain*, pp. 301-325); Warburg, *Caesar's First Expedition to Britain* (*Engl. Hist. Rev.*, 1923, vol. XXXVIII, pp. 226-240). The question of Portus-Itius has always excited the scholars. It is a military expert, Napoleon I, who emphatically pronounced himself in favour of Boulogne (cf. his *Précis des guerres de César*). His nephew endorsed and explained this choice at length in his *Histoire de Jules César*, vol. II, pp. 166-171. Nevertheless, Wissant still has its advocates. Cf. 1626, Chifflet, *Portus Iccius Julii Caesaris demonstratus per J.-J. Chiffletium*.—1694, ommer, *Julii Caesaris Portus Iccius illustratus*.—1780, Mann, *Dissertation dans laquelle on tâche de déterminer précisément le port où Jules César s'est embarqué pour passer dans la Grande-Bretagne et celui où il aborda ; ainsi que le jour précis où il fit ce voyage* (*Mém. de l'Ac. des Sc. et Belles-Lettres de Bruxelles*, vol. III, pp. 231-255).—1803, Dévérité, *Dissertation tendant à prouver . . . que César, lors de sa première invasion dans l'Isle de la Grande-Bretagne (l'Angleterre) ne s'embarqua point à Calais ou Boulogne, mais dans les ports placés à l'embouchure de la Somme*.—1862, Abbé Haigneré, *Etude sur le Portus Itius de Jules César*.—1879, Wauters, *Wissant, l'ancien Portus Iccius* (*Bull. de l'Ac. des Sc., Lettres et B.-A. de Belgique*, 2nd series,

vol. XLVII, pp. 111-169).—1884, the same, *Quelques détails sur Wissant* (id., 3rd series, vol. VII, pp. 668-690).—1889, the same, *A propos du Portus Itius* (id., vol. IX, pp. 413-423).—1888, R. Schneider, *Portus Itius* (Berlin).—1914, Haverfield, *Portus Itius* (Class. Rev., pp. 82-84).—1914, Rice Holmes, *F. Haverfield on Portus Itius* (id., pp. 193-196, cf. pp. 45-47).—1914, Ganter, *Cäsars Fahrt nach Britannien: die Lösung der Portus Itius-Gesoriacus Frage* (Düsseldorf).—Rice Holmes has examined the question in its totality in a searching essay which occupies pages 552-595 in his book *Ancient Britain*.

At the time when Hitler was preparing to invade England an Italian review, *L'Illustrazione Romana*, published a special issue dated July 15, 1940, with copious illustrations under the evocative title: *Come Giulio Cesare sbarcò sulle coste inglesi e sbaragliò i Britanni*. The text was written by J. Sottocchia.

168. Did Caesar cross the Channel? Another question which has been argued. Cf. Surtees, *Julius Caesar: did he cross the Channel?* (London, 1866); the same, *Julius Caesar: showing . . . that he never crossed the Channel* (London, 1868); Wainwright, *Julius Caesar, did he cross the Channel?* (London, 1869); Mohler, *Caesar and the Channel Idea* (Class. W., vol. XXXVIII, 1944-1945, pp. 189-191).

169. There is no agreement either on the exact point of landing. A dozen hypotheses have been set forth. Deal, the point suggested by Napoleon III, is also preferred by Rice Holmes, whose essay, *The Place of Caesar's Landing in Britain* (op. cit., pp. 595-666), undertakes a review of all the other solutions offered; I direct the attention of the reader to this remarkable work. It is in the course of this landing that the exploit of the centurion M. Caesius Scaeva (related by Valerius Maximus) may have taken place, who with four companions had attempted to seize from a nearby rock an isle which was occupied by a substantial body of Britons (III, 2, 23).

170. Caesar's account: cf. Rice Holmes, *The Credibility of Caesar's Narrative of His Invasions of Britain* (op. cit., pp. 666-672).

171. For the Treveri: cf. Steininger, *Geschichte der Trevirer unter der Herrschaft der Römer* (Treves, 1845).

172. For reference on the second expedition: Lange, *Caesars zweiter Zug nach Britannien* (Jahrb. f. class. Philol., 1889, vol. CXXXIX, pp. 187-192); Vogel, *Caesars zweite Expedition nach Britannien* (id., vol. CLIII, pp. 269-288), and, above all, Rice Holmes, *Caesar's Second Invasion of Britain* (op. cit., pp. 326-354).

173. For the clash on the Great Stour, we must again refer to Rice Holmes, *Where did Caesar Encounter the Britons on the Morning after the Second Landing in Britain?* (op. cit., pp. 678-685). A good general survey is found in Vine's book, *Caesar in Kent. The Landing of Julius Caesar and His Battles with the Ancient Britons* (London, 1886).

174. The war chariots of Cassivellaunus. Caesar describes them in B.G., V, 16, 2. Cf. the commentary on this passage by Baur (*Correspondenzbl. f. d. Gelehrt. u. Realsch. Württembergs*, 1866, no. 2) and Rice Holmes, *War-chariots of the Britons* (op. cit., pp. 674-677).

175. Napoleon III, in his desire to identify the place where Caesar had crossed the Thames, sent two officers of his general staff to Britain, Stoffel (the future historian of the civil war) and Gamelin, with instructions to undertake all the requisite researches. They produced no result (*op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 191, n. 2). We may refer to the essay of Rice Holmes, *Where did Caesar Cross the Thames?* (*op. cit.*, pp. 692-699). An English scholar named Gale treated this question in 1779 in *A Dissertation on Caesar's Passage over the Thames* (*Archaeologia*, vol. I, pp. 184-190).

176. If we are to believe Caesar on this point, the strength of the charioteers was made up of four thousand men. Napoleon III believes there were six to a chariot (*op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 192). That would give Cassivellaunus a 'motorized' division of six hundred and sixty vehicles.

177. Florus goes so far as to claim that Caesar managed to capture Cassivellaunus and had him thrown into prison. There is no appearance of truth in this.

178. Florus writes, and we may believe that on this occasion he is nearer to the truth: '[Caesar] returned with much richer spoil than the first time. The sea itself, more calm, favoured his return.'

### 34 *Ambiorix*

Sources: CAESAR, B.G., V, 24-53; Suetonius, 25; Plutarch, *Caes.*, 24; Dion Cassius, XL, 4-11; Cicero, *ad Quint.*, fr., III, 8, 166 (Julia's death); Livy, *per.*, 106; Eutropius, VI, 17, 3; Orosius, VI, 10, 1-9; Polyaeus, VII, 23, 6. Add, for the second crossing into Germany: CAESAR, B.G., VI, 9-10; Dion Cassius, XL, 32, 1-2; Livy, *per.*, 107; Florus, I, 45, 15, II, 30, 22; for the massacre of the Eburones: CAESAR, B.G., V, 29-44; Dion Cassius, XL, 32, 3-5.

For reference: JULIAN, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 365-408; Abel, *César dans le nord-est des Gaules* (Metz, 1862); Eichheim, *Caesars Feldzüge gegen die germanischen Belgier* (Neuburg a. D., 1864).

179. Julia's death. Suetonius writes: 'In the same space of time he lost, first his mother, then his daughter, and shortly afterwards, his grandson' (26). Valerius Maximus relates the circumstances of her death: 'One day, in the assembly where the election of aediles was taking place, they brought her the blood-stained toga of her husband, the great Pompey. At the sight of this, seized with fear and dreading news of some plot against his life, she fell in a swoon. As she was pregnant at the time, this sudden terror and the pain caused by her fall precipitated a premature delivery. She died from it' (IV, 6, 4).

180. The camps of the legates: cf. Robert, *Le camp de Labienus près de Mouzon* (Reims, 1935); the same, *Le camp de Labienus sur les confins des Trévires* (Châlons-sur-Marne, 1934); Fiedler, *Die Lager der Caesaren-Legaten*

T. Labienus, Q. Cicero, Q. Titurius Sabinus und L. Aurunculeius Cotta in den Ardennen (Rhein-Westph. Mus., 1843, vol. II, pp. 161-174 ; cf. pp. 148-160).

181. The Carnutes : cf. Monvel, *Etude sur les expéditions de J. César dans les Carnutes* (Orleans, 1863).

182. Q. Cicero's letter to Caesar : cf. Wightman, *The Second Letter to Caesar by the Hand of Quintus Cicero from his Winter Camp in 54, and its Bearer* (Class. Weekly, 1937-1938, vol. XXXI, pp. 195-196), and Wiemer, *Quintus Tullius Cicero* (Iena, 1930).

183. The powerful personality of Ambiorix has not so far attracted the attention of the historians to the extent it deserves. Cf., pending the arrival of a better study, Beduwer, *Ambiorix* (Brussels, 1884) ; Boulen, *Ambiorix et Aduatuca* (Brussels, 1903).

184. Points of topographical exactitude : cf. Wauters, *Quelques mots sur la situation du camp dans lequel Quintus Cicéron fut assiégé par les Nerviens* (Mém. des savants étr. de l'Ac. des Sc. de Belgique, 1847, vol. XXI). Cf. Veith, *Belagerung und Entsatz des Römerlagers bei Namur im Jahre 54 v. Chr.* (Monatsschr. f. d. Gesch. Westdeutshl., 1879, vol. V, pp. 275-299).

185. Caesar's letter : cf. B.G., V, 48, and the commentary on this passage by Adero in *Class. Weekly*, 1937, vol. XXXI, pp. 90-91. Caesar's words read, 'græcis conscriptam litteris'.

186. The Senones. We may add to Caesar's opinion that of Florus : 'A people of untamed character and barbarous habits. Moreover, their gigantic height, their enormous weapons and everything else about them inspired terror, and they seemed to be made to slaughter peoples and sack cities' (I, 13).

187. The campaign against the Eburones. We find, dating from the sixteenth century (publ. in 1541) a learned treatise by Hubert Thomas, *De Tungris et Eburonibus, aliisque inferioris Germaniae populis . . . commentarius, utilis omnibus qui Caesaris de bello Gallico historiam recte intelligere cupiunt*. Cf. Henrard, *Jules César et les Eburons* (Brussels, 1882, publ. in the collection of Treatises awarded prizes by the Belgian Academy) ; Harroy, *Les Eburons à Limbourg* (Namur, 1889), and the essay by Bergk, *Caesars Krieg gegen Ambiorix und die Eburonen*, in *Zur Gesch. und Topogr. der Rheinlande in röm. Zeit*, by the same author, pp. 25-38.

188. The second crossing of the Rhine. The majority of the essays mentioned in notes 162 and 163 deal with this subject.

189. Cf. Carcopino, *op. cit.*, p. 811.

190. Why did Caesar leave Germany so hurriedly ? Koehne endeavours to explain this at some length in his essay *Die Gründe von Cäsars schnellen Rückzug aus Deutschland im Jahre 53 v. Chr.* (Hist. Vierteljahrsschr., 1927, vol. XXIV, pp. 529-556).

191. The rôle played by the Sugambri. Ebeling, in a curious article : *Sugambri, Eburonen und Caesar* (Neue Jahrb. für Deutsche und antike Bildung, 1941, pp. 243-251), claims that the Sugambri, actuated by a feeling of solidarity, had pretended to take part in the spoliation, with a view to withdrawing the property of the Eburones from the rapacity of the Romans in order to be able thereafter to restore it to its rightful owners (!).



192. Charisius mentions a letter from Caesar to Cicero in which he blames Cicero's brother, the legate, for 'not having maintained his strength in the camp as befitted the duty of a circumspect and strict commander' (101).

### 35 Vercingetorix

Sources : CAESAR, B.G., VII, 1-90 ; PLUTARCH, *Caes.*, 25-27 ; DION CASSIUS, XL, 33-41, XLIII, 19, 4 ; FLORUS, I, 45, 20-26 ; VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, II, 47, 1 ; LIVY, *per.*, 107 and 108 ; OROSIUS, VII, 11, 1-11 ; STRABO, IV, 2, 3 ; DIODORUS OF SICILY, IV, 19, 2 ; POLYAENUS, VIII, 23, 11.

For reference : the corresponding chapter of volume III of the *Histoire de la Gaule* by Jullian (p. 418-535) and his book *Vercingétorix*, admirably written and of high historical value.

193. Octavia offered to Pompey : Suet., 26. He preferred the daughter of Scipio Metellus, who, to follow Plutarch's description, in addition to her beauty was 'versed in literature, played the lyre very well, had studied geometry and read works of philosophy with profit' (*Pomp.*, 58).

194. The biographies of Vercingetorix, the greater part of them strongly romanticized, are plentiful. Only Jullian's book should be noted. Some bold and original ideas are to be found in the *Vercingétorix* of M.-M. Gorce (Paris, 1935). The monograph of Norris, *Caesar and Vercingetorix* (Cambridge, 1931), conscientiously annotates the seventh book of the *Commentaries* without adding any fresh point of view.—The name of Vercingetorix. According to Toutain, *Un grand héros national, Vercingétorix* (p. 13), this name means 'The supreme monarch of the peoples marching against the enemy.' Cf. Arbois de Joubainville, *Les noms gaulois dont le dernier terme est 'rix' dans le De Bello Gallico* (Paris, 1891).—To M.-M. Gorce (*op. cit.*, p. 105) the father of Vercingetorix was 'the pope of the Druids, if one dares use this expression : the Supreme Pontiff of the Gauls.'

195. The opening of hostilities : cf. the essay of Constans, *Les débuts de la lutte entre César et Vercingétorix* (*Mus. Belge*, 1923, vol. XXVII, pp. 201-209).

196. Gorgobina : cf. Mauduit, *Considérations sur l'emplacement du premier campement de Vercingétorix et la Gorgobina des Boiens* (Châteauroux, 1891).—Agedincum : cf. Bellanger, *Agedincum* (*Rev. de la Soc. des études hist.*, 1893, 4th series, vol. XI, pp. 201-207).

197. Caesar's itineraries : cf. Bréan, *Itinéraire de l'expédition de César d'Agedincum a Gergovia-Boiorum et a Avaricum* (Orleans, 1865) ; Boyer (H.), *César chez les Bituriges* (1865).

198. The German mercenaries : cf. Toutain, *Rôle des Germains comme auxiliaires montés dans la campagne de César contre Vercingétorix* (*Bull. de la Soc. nat. des antiquaires de France*, 1915, pp. 181-182).

199. The siege of Avaricum : cf. Saint-Hyppolite *Recherches sur quelques points historiques relatifs au siège de Bourges* (Paris, 1841) ; Eberz, *Über die*

*Structur der gallischen Städtewauern und über die Belagerung von Avaricum* (Zeitschr. f. Alterthumswissensch., 1848, nos. 75-76); Vianello, *L'assedio di Avaricum* (Genoa, 1896); Laurand, *César à Bourges* (Rev. des Et. lat., 1937, vol. XV, pp. 64-66).

200. The massacre of the inhabitants of Avaricum: eight hundred of them, warned by the first screams, fled the town at the start of the assault and succeeded in reaching the camp of Vercingetorix (cf. B.G., VII, 28, 5).

201. The crossing of the Allier: B.G., VII, 35, 4. Cf. the commentary of Drosihn (*Jahrb. f. class. Philol.*, 1866, vol. XCIII, p. 178).

202. The entire part which refers to the intrigues and betrayals of the Aeduan nobility (as well as the double election) has been dismissed rather summarily by Julian in a few lines (cf. *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 471).

203. Cf. Julian, *op. cit.*, pp. 478-479, and Carcopino, *op. cit.*, pp. 820-821.—The number of essays devoted to Gergovia (as well as to Alesia) is past reckoning. Some of them are frankly in the realm of fantasy, others delight in the meticulous analysis of trifling details or are used as a pretext for personal polemics. I shall only draw attention here to a few of the more recent ones. The book by Gorce (*op. cit.*, pp. 139-212) contains a general survey followed by a sufficiently ample nomenclature. In 1933 Busset, an Auvergnat painter, published a book entitled *Gergovia, capitale des Gaules*. Stoffel had sited Gergovia on a hill four miles to the south of Clermont-Ferrand. Busset considered it should be transported two miles to the north of the town. P. de Nolhac immediately published an article in *l'Illustration* of February 25, 1933, called *La découverte de Gergovie*, accompanied by photographs, in which he supported the suggestion of Busset. A brisk controversy ensued (cf. the critical comment of J. Toutain in the *Etudes classiques*, 1933, pp. 306-311; the article by Henri Pourrat in *La Revue des Deux Mondes* of August 15 of the same year; and that of Busset in *Cah. Hist. Arch.*, 1935, vol. IX, pp. 119-131). The researches conducted on the new site remained almost entirely fruitless, while on the plateau of the traditional Gergovia there was a continuous discovery of foundations, ceramics, and coins. In the course of the years up to 1936 Gorce undertook the verification of Stoffel's excavations, which proved him to be correct.

204. For the battle of Gergovia: cf. MacVeagh, *Caesar De Bello Gallico*, VII, 45-52. *The Attack at Gergovia: a Case of the 'Limited Objective'* (*Class. Weekly*, 1928, vol. XXI, pp. 177-181); Desforges and Fournier, *La bataille de Gergovie* (*Actes du Congrès de Nîmes*, 1932, pp. 177-180); Steinberg, *Gergovia. Beiträge zur Erläuterung von Caesar B. Gall VII, 36-53* (*Philol.*, 1874, vol. XXXIII, pp. 449-460).

205. The preliminaries to the siege of Alesia: cf. Fallue, *Mouvements stratégiques de César et de Vercingétorix avant le siège d'Alésia* (Rev. arch., 1858, pp. 275-284); Thévenot, *La marche de César et de Vercingétorix avant le blocus d'Alésia* (*Annales de Bourgogne*, 1937, vol. IX, pp. 139-146).

206. Alesia. I consider it useless and superfluous to tabulate the innumerable essays written about this city. A special review, *Pro Alésia*, was devoted to it. See the nomenclature provided by Julian in his note on pp. 502-504 of

his third volume. For the siege itself the reader may refer to the essay of the Duc d'Aumale which appeared in 1858 in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes* (vol. XV, pp. 64-146), and the reply of Desjardins, *Alésia, 7e campagne de Jules César* (Paris, 1859), and he may consult, frequently to his advantage, the *Ephémérides d'Alésia*, by S. Reinach, which appeared in 1925 in *La Revue archéologique* (vol. XXI, pp. 26-100). Cf. Ooteghem, *L'énigme d'Alésia* (Musée belge, 1924, vol. XXVIII, pp. 237-254).

207. Sal. Reinach, in an essay published in 1906, posed the question which provided him with his title: *Pourquoi Vercingétorix a renvoyé sa cavalerie d'Alésia?* His answer is: 'A modern general, in an analogous situation, threatened with starvation, would have unhorsed his cavalrymen and kept the horses in order to make up the shortage in the rations of his troops. At the rate of 300 grammes a day, five thousand horses of normal size could have fed 80,000 men for more than a month. If Vercingetorix, who was lacking neither in foresight nor intelligence, disposed in this way of nearly one and a half million daily rations, it is because it did not cross his mind that a Gaul could consume horse-meat. . . . We do not know of any document which attests to the aversion of the Gauls to horse-meat; but this incident in the siege of Alesia is, in this respect, the equivalent of the most authentic text.'

208. In order to minimize the implacable cruelty of the Gallic commander's decision, Gorce hit upon the following strange explanation: 'Meanwhile he had to decide to get rid of the women and children who were in the town. . . . Since it was impossible to allow these women and children to pass over to the Roman lines on their own, all the men of the tribe were made to accompany them. . . . By abandoning them, the army of Vercingetorix denuded itself of the best defenders of the town. . . . But it was for the sake of the aged, the women, children, and the sick that this sacrifice was considered necessary' (*op. cit.*, pp. 255-256).

209. The surrender of Vercingetorix: Caesar's text is brief but perfectly precise: '*... eo duces producantur Vercingetorix deditur, arma projiciuntur*. The commanders were brought before him, Vercingetorix was delivered up to him, their arms were laid at his feet' (VII, 89, 4). From this it follows that no distinction was made of Vercingetorix in the collective surrender of the Gallic leaders. His appearance on horseback in his finest armour and his touching, pathetic parade before Caesar figure for the first time in Plutarch's narrative—in other words, more than a hundred and fifty years later—and without any indication of source. A little later, this version was adopted by the compiler Florus who embroidered on it. Plutarch has Vercingetorix dismounting from his horse, bowing to Caesar and sitting at his feet without saying a word. Florus attributes to him the following phrase on surrendering his arms: 'Take them. I am valiant, but you are more valiant than I and you have defeated me.' It was only in the third century of our era that there appears in the account of the Greek historian, Dion Cassius, the famous scene, generally acknowledged to be authentic by modern historians: 'Hoping that the friendship which had once linked him with Caesar would help him to gain his mercy, Vercingetorix betook himself to the proconsul without

having sued for peace through a herald, and appeared suddenly before him when the latter was presiding over his tribunal. His appearance caused some terror, for he was tall of stature and had a most imposing presence beneath his armour. There was a profound silence, the Gallic leader fell at Caesar's knees and entreated him, as he pressed his hands, without uttering a word. This scene aroused the pity of the bystanders, who remembered the former fortune of Vercingetorix compared to his present distress. Caesar, on the other hand, held against him as a crime the memories on which he had relied for his pardon. He contrasted his recent strife with the friendship he was recalling, and thereby brought out the odiousness of his conduct in even sharper relief. Therefore, far from being moved by his misfortune, he had him thrown straight away into irons. . . . Referring to this page from Dion Cassius, L.-A. Constans, in his edition of the *B.G.* (coll. Budé, vol. II, p. 278), writes in a note: 'This is a beautiful scene, but it has no semblance of historical truth.' To which Carcopino opposes this terse comment: 'It is not enough for a scene to be beautiful in order to deny it any semblance of historical truth' (*op. cit.*, p. 831).

### 36 Last Attempts at Resistance

Sources: [HIRTIVS], *B.G.*, VIII, 1-46; LIVY, *per.* 108; DION CASSIVS, XL, 42-43; OROSVS, VI, 11, 12-30.

210. The strange figure of Commius deserves closer study. Cf. Boesch, *Commius* (*Philol. Wochenschr.*, 1926, XLVI, pp. 1101-1103).

211. The essays specially devoted to Caesar's second campaign against the Bellovaci are fairly numerous. However, it is rather regrettable that the valiant struggle of Correis and his heroic end are not more frequently brought to the notice of the public at large. Cf. Vatin, *César au camp de Gourieux, ou sa dernière campagne contre les Bellovaques* (Senlis, 1865); Rose, *Le théâtre de la dernière guerre des Bellovaques contre Jules César* (Beauvais, 1866); Plessier, *Notes sur la deuxième campagne de César contre les Bellovaques* (Clermont, 1898); Forbes, *The Topography of Caesar's Last Campaign against the Bellovaci* (*Geogr. Journal*, 1922, no. 3); the essays of Rice Holmes: in his book *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul*, 1899, pp. 803-808; in *The Geogr. Journal*, 1923, and in the second volume of his major work *The Roman Republic*, pp. 287-292; Matherat, *Les 'ponts-de-fascines' de Jules César à Breuil-le-Sec* (*Rev. Archéologique*, 1936, pp. 53-94); by the same author, *La deuxième campagne de César contre les Bellovaques* (*Rev. des Et. anc.*, 1937, pp. 347-362).

212. For Dumnacus, chief of the Andecavi, cf. Lachèse, *Défaite de Dumnacus et l'émigration qui la suivit* (Angers, 1864); Guittonneau, *Dumnacus et la plaine de bataille à Louerre* (Angers, 1891).

213. Cf. Richaud, *Lucterius, derniers efforts de la Gaule indépendante* (Cahors, 1866).

214. The river is to be identified with the Tourmente, the spring with the spring of Loulié (Constans, *op. cit.*, p. 113). Upon orders of Napoleon III,

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

excavations were begun in 1865 on the outskirts of the village of Loulié, which permitted the discovery of the underground channel which had drawn off the water—40 metres in length, 1.8 metres high, and 1.5 metres wide (Napoleon III, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 345-346). Cf. for the town and the siege, Champollion-Figeac, *Recherches sur la ville gauloise d'Uxellodunum assiégée et prise par César* (Paris, 1820) ; Schneider, *Uxellodunum* (*Berl. philol. Wochenschr.*, 1887, vol. VII, pp. 602-604) ; Viré, *Les oppida du Quercy et le siège d'Uxellodunum* (Cahors, 1936). We may add the essays of J.-B Cessac published in 1862-1863.

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